SECULARISM:

Unphilosophical, Immoral, and Anti-Social.

VERBATIM REPORT

OF A

THREE NIGHTS' DEBATE

BETWEEN THE

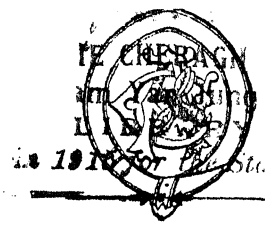
Rev. Dr. McCANN and CHARLES BRADLAUGH,

IN THE

HALL OF SCIENCE, LONDON,

On DECEMBER 7th, 14th, and 21st, 1881.

[*Corrected by both Disputants.*]



LONDON:
GHT PUBLISHING COMPANY,
STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.

1881.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY ANNIE BESANT AND CHARLES BRADLAUGH,
28, STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.

SECULARISM:

UNPHILOSOPHICAL, IMMORAL, AND ANTI-SOCIAL.

Verbatim Report of a Three Nights' Debate between the REV. DR. MCCANN *and* CHARLES BRADLAUGH, *on December 7th, 14th, and 21st*, 1881.

FIRST NIGHT.—W. BARNARD, ESQ., in the Chair.

The Chairman having read the conditions of Debate, the Rev. Dr. MCCANN said:—Another debate on Secularism! And why another? Surely there have been enough, and more than enough, on that subject already, without adding to their number. Can anything be urged on either side that has not been urged before? Such may be the thoughts of many; and I grant, not unreasonable ones; still, though I may not have much that is fresh to bring before you, I may arrange the old materials in such form that it will be readily seen whether my opponent is following my lead, as he is bound to do, or whether he is chalking out a new course for himself, and leaving my reasonings to take care of themselves. In such a discussion as this, it is of the utmost importance that the audience should be able to see at a glance whether the disputants are sticking to the point, or whether they are fighting shy of it. I have therefore arranged what I have to say in a series of propositions which are simple of apprehension and consecutive in thought, but the importance of which must be patent to all who read them. In order that the debate might be as thorough as possible, I sent a copy of them to Mr. Bradlaugh about a month ago, so that he is perfectly aware of the line of argument I propose adopting. (Cheers.) I base my views regarding Secularism on what I believe to be sufficient reasons. Mr. Bradlaugh doubtless does the same; we have now to show whose are the superior reasons, and in doing this I

hope that each will personally respect the other as a searcher for truth (cheers); but while doing this, I may state so far as our reasonings are concerned, I give no quarter and I ask none.

To proceed then to our subject. My first proposition is that Secularism is Atheism. This, I fancy, Mr. Bradlaugh will not dispute, still it is important that I should have it acknowledged. Understand that I am not discussing whether Atheism be true or false, with that we have no concern at present, my only contention is that Secularism is Atheism. In reference to this Mr. Bradlaugh said in his debate with Mr. Harrison (p. 13): "there is another point that I do not think I need trouble to discuss, whether Secularism is Atheism or not, because I think it is. I have always said so, I believe, for the last thirteen years of my life, whenever I have had an opportunity of doing so." That Mr. Bradlaugh has not changed his opinion is shown by the *National Reformer* for October 16th, 1881, in which he writes: "I am, too, an Atheist, and I hold that the logical and ultimate consequence of adopting Secularism must be Atheism," and I perfectly agree with him, for the principles of the British Secular Union seem to me to be logically absurd. To say, as they do, that outside the concerns of "the present life, Secularist members are free to hold any opinions, and to promulgate such opinions on their own responsibility," seems to me to be very like quiet banter, for what opinions can be outside the concerns of this present life on any possible subject, philosophical or scientific? I therefore hold most thoroughly that the position of Mr. Bradlaugh is the only logical one, that is to say, that Secularism is Atheism.

My next proposition is that Secularism is Necessitarianism. Necessitarianism denies that we have freedom to will, and consequently affirms that our actions are not within our own control. The doctrine as stated by Mr. Mill (Examination, 562) is that "A volition is a moral effect, which follows the corresponding moral causes as certainly and invariably as physical effects follow their physical causes. Whether it must do so, I acknowledge myself to be entirely ignorant, be the phænomena moral or physical: and I condemn accordingly the word necessity as applied to either case." You will observe that he places mental acts and

physical in the same category of invariable sequence; that is, that there is no more freedom in the volition of a man than in the growth of a flower. He condemns the word necessity, as do all his school, but why? Because he does not know that any happening must happen; he does not know that if a cannon ball strike a wall with any amount of force the wall must fall; he only knows it does fall. Indeed Professor Bain states this explicitly when he says that ("Mental and Moral Science," 406), "To express causation we need only name one thing, the antecedent or cause, and another thing the effect; a flying cannon shot is a cause, the tumbling down of a wall is the effect." Messrs. Mill and Bain would tell us that they do not know that the wall must fall, they only know that it does fall; it is not knocked down, it tumbles down. This being their only reason for objecting to the term necessity, I shall continue to use it, as I have a very strong conviction that the wall is under the necessity of falling.

Necessitarianism then denies that we can in any degree originate our own actions. It affirms that these are the invariable effects of certain unavoidable causes. It denies that we are in any true sense of the term, agents, or have any self-determination, or any self-control. There is none in the flower, there is none in the wall, and Necessitarianism holds equal sway in all such cases. We are merely links in the chain of happenings, as much the creatures of circumstances as the links of any cable of a ship. We are told that circumstances, over which we have no control, originate our motives, and our motives produce our actions; we being only the channels through which flows the stream of antecedents and consequents; we are as helpless in the matter, and have as little to do with their nature, as has a river bed with the water that flows through it. In perfect harmony with this is the teaching of Mr. Bradlaugh, as it is bound to be. His words are (Cooper debate, p. 43): "He (Mr. Cooper) says that man is a free agent, for he can sin against his own conscience. I say he cannot sin. Man cannot resist the circumstances that result in volition." Understand this clearly as it is of the utmost importance, and it shall give direction to all I may hereafter say. I am not now attempting to disprove Necessitarianism. My present purpose is to explain it, and I hope

not unfairly. Mr. Bradlaugh has put the whole question as concisely as possible—that man cannot resist the circumstances that result in volition. In other words, man has no power of resistance ; not only can he not overcome them, he cannot even resist them. I would not press this word "resist" so strongly were it merely a word used incautiously in the heat of debate ; but as it is the exact expression of the views of that school, I am justified in making what use of it I choose. We certainly fancy we sometimes resist, and resist pretty steadily too—so steadily as eventually to overcome the temptation. It is all a mistake, say our friends ; there is no resisting the circumstances that result in volition! You see a man coming out of a public house perfectly drunk. There was no help for it ; he could not resist. Poor fellow, he was the victim of antecedents and consequents. Don't blame him. Blame him! You cannot blame him if your antecedents do not produce blame. You cannot help it if they do. Your judgment of his drunkenness is no affair of yours or his ; it is the necessary effect of the circumstances that have resulted in volition! Mr. Bradlaugh is here a Secularist leader and a defender of their cause. But why here? Not because he has thought out the matter carefully for himself, and has determined to cast in his lot with theirs. Not so ; it has been all determined, not by himself, but for him, in the chain of causation. According to my friend's teaching, he has no more power to be aught but an Atheist than I have to be aught but a Theist. No praise to him, no blame to me. We are what we are, because by no personal possibility could we have been otherwise. I do not fancy it can be a pleasant thought for Mr. Bradlaugh that he never does, but is always done. But that is the fundamental principal of Necessitarianism ; and as he must be a Necessitarian, being an Atheist, he has no help for it.

Necessitarians, however, acknowledge a difference between physical and mental causation. Professor Bain writes, "Mental and Moral Science," p. 399 :—"The speciality of voluntary action as compared with the powers of the inanimate world is, that the antecedent and the consequent are conscious or mental states (coupled, of course, with bodily states)." According to this, voluntary action means that you know what you are doing. If a man

compels me to drink a cup of poison, Bain would tell me I do it voluntarily, because I know I am drinking it! The only volitional difference, then, between the actions of a rose and those of a man is, that the one knows what is being done and the other does not. So far, I think, the rose has the best of it, for the rose, when blooming but poorly, does not know what a poor-looking wretch it is, but the drunkard is perfectly aware he is making a fool of himself, yet has no power to resist it. It will not do for Mr. Bradlaugh to say that this is not his teaching, but that of Professor Bain, and therefore he is not responsible for it. The words may not be his, but the thought is an integral part of his system. He affirms we are not free in any degree to self-determine our own course in life—that we are not agents but instruments; of course he will acknowledge that we are conscious of what we are doing, while the flower is not; consequently, whatever may be said of the teaching of Mr. Bain on this subject, applies to the teaching of Mr. Bradlaugh and of all logical Secularists. If there be any difference between Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Bain on this point, it will be regarding the consciousness of the flower, as Mr. Bradlaugh seems a little in doubt on that subject. When asked by Dr. Baylee (page 50) the question, "Is a cabbage stalk non-intelligent?" his answer was, "If you mean has a cabbage the power of thinking, I have no evidence." Still, I have a strong impression that, in spite of this answer, he will agree with Professor Bain.

We must not, however, imagine that while Necessitarians deny all freedom in volition, they deny it everywhere; that would be impolitic, because the word freedom, and the thought freedom exist, and so a place must be found for them somewhere, consequently a place has been found, and a very queer place it is. It is not within our mental life at all, but altogether outside of it. It is thus explained by Bain (p. 398): "The capital objection to free-will is the unsuitability, irrevalence, or unpropriety of the metaphor 'freedom' in the question of the sequence of motive and act in volition. The proper meaning of 'free' is the absence of external compulsion; every sentient being, under a motive to act, and not interfered with by any other being, is to all intents free; the fox impelled by hunger, and proceeding unmolested to a poultry yard, is a free agent." This is significant, and

somewhat racy. You will observe in the first place that freedom in the selection of action is a "metaphor." The fox is not free to decline paying the hens a visit, he is only free to go on till he is stopped; if he be caught in a trap he is free no longer. Most decidedly not. And this is Secularist freedom, the freedom of Necessitarians, mere absence of PHYSICAL restraint! Take another illustration, perhaps more to the point. The man compelled by circumstances which he could not resist goes for drink, goes home drunk. Compelled by circumstances which he could not resist—by hunger—he demands his supper. There being none for him, compelled by circumstances which he could not resist, he raises his fist to strike his wife. So far there is no freedom in the case. Now, however, he is free, for there is no external obstacle in the way of his arm; at least there was not, till his wife caught it with one of her hands, and, compelled by circumstances which she could not resist, gave him a stunner with the other. Poor fellow! he soon lost the little freedom he had; first floored by whiskey, and then by his wife, without the power to resist either.

But this aspect of the question has another application. If freedom means absence of external compulsion, and if no man in England is externally compelled to think in one way rather than in another, then every man in England is a freethinker. So let our friends, the Secularists, be consistent, and give the right hand of fellowship to every thinker in England as a brother freethinker.

But if Secularism be Necessitarianism, then it must be also Fatalism, for to my mind they are exactly the same. I know that Mr. Bradlaugh denies this. He writes ("Freethinker's Text Book"): "The Fatalist says what is, is, and must be, could not have been otherwise, and cannot be altered. The Necessitarian says what is, is, and must have resulted from such and such conditions, but the conditions might have been varied, and the results would then have been different." The only difference, then, even according to Mr. Bradlaugh, is that the conditions might have been varied in the past. So far as the present life is concerned they are identical, but how could the conditions have been varied in the past? If our volitions spring from our conditions, which we have no power to alter, neither could our ancestors have altered theirs, and so could not have

altered ours. Consequently, Fatalism and Necessitarianism are the same thing. The application of all this—that is, of Secularism, to the affairs of life, will occupy our next evenings. Meantime, I claim to have shown what Necessitarianism is; also that Secularism is Atheism, that Atheism involves Necessitarianism or Fatalism, and that consequently all logical Secularists must be Atheists; being Atheists, must be Necessitarians or Fatalists. Mr. Bradlaugh will shortly have the opportunity of showing whether I have in any way misrepresented the theory or whether my illustrations have been in any degree unfair. It will not do to say they have been, the fallacies or the unfairness must be clearly exposed, and until they are, I hold that I have proved my first and second propositions.

My next proposition is, that Secularism, in so far as it is Necessitarianism, is unphilosophical and therefore untrue. It is evident that if there be any ultimate standard of truth, whatever contradicts that must be false, and by the fact of contradiction is proved false. Is there such a standard? I hold there is, and that it is found in Consciousness. In other words, whatever consciousness affirms is, and must be, true, because its authority is unquestionable. On this subject Sir William Hamilton (Lectures I., 265) writes: "Now, it is at once evident that philosophy, as it affirms its own possibility, must affirm the veracity of consciousness, for as philosophy is only a scientific development of the facts which consciousness reveals, it follows that philosophy, in denying or doubting the testimony of consciousness, would deny or doubt its own existence. So far there is, and can be, no dispute; if philosophy be possible, the evidence of consciousness is authentic." This position is so self-evident that it is not easy to imagine the possibility of anyone attempting to deny it. Yet the feat has been attempted by Mr. Bradlaugh, who apparently saw very clearly that he must either invalidate the testimony of consciousness or give up his Necessitarianism and his Secularism. In his discussion with Mr. Lawson (p. 25) he writes: "A maniac peasant deems himself a prince; to himself he is a prince; his consciousness does it not deceive him?" Surely the fact that he has to go to a maniac for an illustration ought to have aroused his suspicions regarding its worth. Mr. Buckle, whom he quotes in confirmation of his views, goes to a man in delirium tremens

for his illustration, and states that he is conscious of seeing spectres and phantoms that do not exist. Just fancy anyone being conscious of seeing the non-existent! We may believe in that which has no existence, or imagine it, but to be conscious of it is inherently absurd. A peasant conscious that he is a prince! Surely Mr. Bradlaugh is too acute to believe anything so foolish. He is apparently confounding consciousness with the interpretation of consciousness. We are conscious of our own mental states, but the inference from that state is not given in consciousness. It is perfectly true that the peasant is conscious of the belief that he is a prince, but that is a very different matter from being conscious that he is one. Consciousness is not responsible for false judgments, or for variety of dispositions, or for disturbance of brain. But it seems useless to dwell upon this point, because we must either admit the truthfulness of consciousness or give up all reasoning as useless, or impossible, in a word, we commit philosophical suicide.

Next to the consciousness of our own existence is the consciousness that we are intelligent agents capable of a certain amount of self-determination. I do not say that I am convinced that I am free, but that I know that I am. The conviction is a later thing than the knowledge, and must be founded on evidence. But where is this evidence? Only in the preceding knowledge, for it could be found nowhere else, it never could be found outside myself, but always in my own processes. Each one knows himself in some degree the author of his own actions. I say in some degree, because no one contends that any human being is perfectly unwarped by his inherited tendencies, his education, and his surroundings; but I do contend that every one knows that all these things still leave him a certain amount of freedom of self-control, that amount may not be alike in any two individuals, but in all sane persons it is found in some degree. Bearing this in mind I say that we know as a fact that when we are deciding between alternative courses, we are deciding the matter ourselves, and it is not decided for us by some remote antecedence. I know that my being here to night is in part my action, and not wholly the action of my ancestors. I am conscious I am not a mere force driven helplessly to and fro by the winds of circumstances,

without any power to control myself. I know in certain cases that I am controlling myself. If there be one fact in my life more clearly apprehended by me than another, it is this, that I am the cause of my own actions; that, in spite of Mr. Bradlaugh's assertion, I can sin if I will, or I can struggle against it if I will—that if another tempt me to wrong, I may yield, or I may reject the suggestion; but if I yield, I yield, and have myself to blame, and must not throw that blame on some remote event, and console myself by saying what is, is, and could not have been otherwise. I feel assured that whatever Mr. Bradlaugh may feel himself compelled to say on this platform, by the exigencies of theory, in practical life if he saw any man steal, for example, he would not say to him, "it is all right, you could not help it, you are only the victim of your antecedents." Because he would be perfectly aware that the thief would consider he was being laughed at, as he would know better than this. Of course we have reasons and motives for our conduct, we do not act irrationally, but the will is not by them constrained, the strongest motive does not determine the will, but the will determines what motives shall be allowed to gain strength, by its control of intelligence and attention. Reason as we may on this matter, we must ultimately refer the results to consciousness, and if they be inconsistent with its facts, they must be rejected as untrue. That Mr. Bradlaugh feels his reasonings on this subject to be inconsistent with it, is pretty evident from the fact that he tries to shake our belief in the authority of consciousness, or rather tries to shake our knowledge of ourselves, a task no one would attempt unless compelled by a dire necessity.

But this theory of the constrained action of the will is easily tested by experiment and its fallacy exposed. Suppose I were to ask you all to raise your right hand, and in response to my appeal a certain number of arms arose, would you not laugh at me if I told you that it was not you who raised them or who kept them from rising, that they were raised but not by you? Would you not know the action was your own? If you knock a man down purposely, what does your consciousness tell you? Why it seems useless to argue the point; it is too palpable to admit of dispute. Do we not know we are not talking nonsense when we say "I will," "I shall," "I choose," "I determine," and other words in the vocabu-

lary of freedom? Yet, if my friend be correct, they must be nonsense, and the whole language of volition had better be abolished, and not allowed to remain any longer to puzzle and deceive us. In the name of honesty let us be thorough in this matter, and either acknowledge Necessitarianism to be nonsense, or banish all the words that contradict it, and construct a vocabulary applicable to animated machines. In other words form a new language altogether, for most assuredly our own present language, as are all languages, is in harmony with consciousness, and not in antagonism to it. And as language is the prôduct of the convictions and needs of those who construct it, this fact is of the utmost significance, and greatly strengthens my position, if it need strengthening, which I do not think it does; for I think that, apart from the testimony of language altogether, I have abundantly proved that Necessitarianism is in direct antagonism to the facts of consciousness, and is consequently unphilosophical and false. I have now given what appear to me sufficient reasons for affirming that Secularism is Atheism, that Secularism or Atheism is Necessitarianism, and that Necessitarianism is unphilosophical. I now give place to Mr. Bradlaugh, with the very earnest wish that our discussion may do something to aid the cause of truth, may do something to help our brother men to fight nobly the battle of life, may do something to help them onwards, upwards, manwards. (Cheers.)

Mr. Bradlaugh, who was received with cheers, said:—It is perfectly correct that about a month ago the Rev. Dr. McCann was good enough to write me with the proposition that Secularism was Unphilosophical, Atheistic, Necessitarian, and Anti-social, but he did no more; and therefore although I do not say that I am in any degree unprepared for the debate, the notice that he was good enough to give me did not enlighten me any more than those words would enlighten anybody else. I am quite sure that Dr. McCann will bear in mind that when he wrote, I had, some weeks previously to that—when he was good enough to invite me to consider this question—told him that I should define Secularism as it was defined by the National Secular Society (and as you will find it in the Society's Almanack). I shall, to-night, so define it and explain it. I shall then follow Dr. McCann in some of the number of points—which

are well worthy of consideration—which he put before us. I may say that the view of Secularism which I shall give you is not altogether my own view, but is a view which has been carefully considered by a committee of Secularists appointed at a national meeting of Freethinkers, a committee which considered the matter for about twelve months and which carefully drew up the propositions I shall read you. Their report was endorsed by a conference of Secularists—many of them holding very different opinions upon Secularism—held at Nottingham, who ultimately voted that which I shall put before you. I shall, in reading, call them Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, so as to distinguish them for identification.

"1. "The National Secular Society has been formed to maintain the principles and rights of Freethought, and to direct their application to the secular improvement of this life. By the principle of Freethought is meant the exercise of the understanding upon relevant facts independently of penal or priestly intimidation."

Now what we mean by that is, that there are constantly recurring instances of penal and priestly intimidation, instances in which we think that the exercise of the understanding ought not to be made amenable in the way it is. For example, Richard Vesey came before one of our Metropolitan Coroners to give evidence on an inquiry held on the death of his wife, and happened to say that he did not know anything about god or immortality; he was insulted by the coroner, although he claimed the right to affirm, and although in this case he happened to have the legal right to affirm—for a person with no religious belief now clearly has that right; the coroner probably was so used to insulting Secularists who came before him as jurymen, that he confused the claim of witness-affirmation because he knew jurymen could not exercise that right. We have similar cases as to jurymen happening every day. It is only a week or two ago that one of our Norwich members (Mr. R. A. Cooper) found himself in the same position. I need not give you a long record of these cases, but that is one illustration of what we mean by penal and priestly intimidation. There was a case only the other day in which Mr. Richard Roe was refused by the Recorder of York to be allowed to affirm. At Edmonton two freethought witnesses were in-

sulted by Mr. Alderman Abbiss, on the ground that nothing could bind them, and yet the right of an Atheist witness to affirm under the Evidence Amendments Acts of 1869 and 1870 is clear and indisputable, and has been so held by the Court of Queen's Bench, in a case, in 1875, of a man named Lennard, who said he was an Atheist and sought to affirm but was refused. The National Secular Society fought the case for this poor man, and a mandamus was issued, directing the magistrate to receive the Atheist's evidence. This principle of the National Secular Society urges full scope to the judgment, and claims that it shall be unwarped by penal and priestly intimidation. We hear this week of the case of a poor man who has been called as a witness at Cardiff, who happens to be a Secularist, and who, having claimed the right to affirm, at the present moment is in hourly expectation of being discharged from his occupation under a great company because of his Secularism. We say in this No. 1 principle that we ought to be free from the possibility of penalty for the expression of our views. As Dr. McCann is well aware —Dr. McCann is thoroughly well informed on all these points—by 9 and 10 William III., cap. 32, and by the common law on the matter, I am prosecutable for even the position I am taking and shall take in this debate; and although it is perfectly true that no prosecution for that offence has taken place in England since that of Thomas Pooley, at Bodmin, it has been held to be law by the Court of Exchequer in the case of Cowan *v.* Milburn, where Baron Bramwell held that it might vitiate contracts. We have a case at Bakewell, in Derbyshire, of a man who has been sought to be dismissed from his position as workhouse master simply because it is alleged he held Secularistic views. We have still more of these penal intimidations. I might refer you to the case of the lady beside me, who was deprived of her daughter in consequence of her opinions on religion. At the present moment there is a notice on the Order Book of the House of Commons for the purpose of preventing Dr. E. B. Aveling, for the purpose of preventing Mrs. Besant, for the purpose of preventing my daughters from teaching, as they are entitled to teach, in this Hall—nay, for the purpose of preventing the building itself from being utilised for educational purposes. ("Shame!") I

should have thought that those who cannot agree with us in religious matters would have been glad to see us endeavoring to educate ourselves. I am sure Dr. McCann won't concur in any such intimidation. But our Secularism exists as a militant society for the purpose of relieving Freethinkers from these pains and penalties. Dr. E. B. Aveling has been deprived of his lectureship on Comparative Anatomy at London Hospital because he has publicly identified himself with us. I won't weary you with any further instances, otherwise I might refer to my own case, in which I am kept from my seat in Parliament, and it is actually sought at the present moment, by the aid of a common informer, to ruin me in order to prove that the Secularism which I teach is wrongful and immoral, and some are at present trying to make me bankrupt for penalties for not taking an oath which they compelled me not to take. Now the second proposition I shall read—still from the National Secular Society's principles—is that—

"2. By the rights of Freethought are meant the liberty of free criticism for the security of truth, and the liberty of free publicity for the extension of truth."

On this I put it that there are only two logical positions, one that of absolute submission to authority, or the assertion of the right and duty of private judgment, whatever may be the result of that judgment. In theology the logical extremes are on the one side the Roman Catholic Church, and on the other Atheism. (Cheers.) Now the third proposition is that

"3. Secularism relates to the present existence of man and to actions the issue of which can be tested by experience."

It declares that

"The promotion of human improvements and happiness is the highest duty, and that morality is to be tested by utility."

In this Secularism is guided by, and must be guided by, Anthropology. To know man, it is necessary to learn not only what you are, what the men with whom you come in contact are, but to learn in what they differ; to learn in what, if anything, those differences have been softened down or have been encouraged, or have been productive of benefit or the reverse; to learn what has

been man's history—that is, what have been the histories of the various types and races of mankind—that, so becoming aware of the result of type in consciousness, of type in will, we may see what determines the happiness or misery of man's existence in the place in which he is living. From these researches Secularism learns what events have tended to human improvement and what have not. It examines and compares the various languages and the various religions of the world. And here let me say that I do not accept the definition of language hurriedly given by my friend, and I shall have something more to say about that in its place. Secularism also says:

"4. That, in order to promote effectually the improvement and happiness of mankind, every individual of the human family ought to be well placed and well instructed, and that all who are of a suitable age ought to be usefully employed for their own and the general good."

Secularists cannot help noticing that, until lately, an enormous mass of the people of the world were left almost absolutely without education. Secularism cannot help noticing how the bulk of those who urge that we are immoral and wicked are all the while spending thousands of millions of pounds on killing one another, and until lately were spending, comparatively, only a few pounds on education. Secularism cannot help noticing, whether it be right or wrong, that, while efforts on behalf of infant education, and co-operative effort so far as this nation is concerned, have been limited to the present century in their establishment, they have been associated with men who, on account of their speculative heresies, have been denounced for their immorality. And, finally, the Secularist affirms:

"5. That human improvement and happiness cannot be effectually promoted without civil and religious liberty, and that, therefore, it is the duty of every individual to actively attack all barriers to equal freedom of thought and utterance upon all political, theological and social subjects. The Secularist is one who deduces his moral duties from considerations which pertain to this life, and who, practically recognising the above duties, devotes himself to the promotion of the general good. The object of the National Secular Society is to disseminate the above principles by every legitimate means in its power."

The Secularist, as such, is, politically, neither Imperialist,

Monarchist, nor Republican. I happen to be a Republican, but Secularists claim the right to discuss and examine every form of Government. Theologically, the Secularist claims the same freedom for discussing all creeds, so that if political power should happen to fall into the hands of a Secularist, he would not impose any disability on any sect or creed. (Cheers.) What is true of these political and theological topics is true also of social topics. I happen to be a Republican, but there is nothing in the principles of the society requiring the recognition of Republicanism. There is nothing in the declarations obliging the Secularist to prefer one form of Government to another, unless he happens in his convictions to be of the opinion that a Republican Government tends to the general good and happiness. I happen to be an Atheist, and believe that the free and normal exercise of the understanding on so-called religious problems must tend to Atheism. There are many Secularists who disagree with me. There is no Atheistic pledge in the principles of this Society. If you tell me that every scientific pledge, in result, is an Atheistic pledge, I should be ready to admit it, because I think so. In political economy I happen to be opposed to Socialism, but there is no word in the principles of the Society making any declaration on this head either in its favor or against it. Now I shall, as far as possible, follow the lead which was set me in the opening speech, and although I can travel pretty quickly I shall have to gallop if I catch up my friend. I do not complain of that, because we are not only talking to the crowd assembled in this room (which, I believe, will be a good and well-behaved one), but we are also talking to the people who will read this debate after its conclusion. The first proposition put is that Secularism is Atheism. I happen to think that the consequence of Secularism is Atheism, and I have always said so. Clearly all Secularists are not Atheists. Clearly many people who believe themselves to be sincere Theists can sign the declarations and principles which I have read to you without doing any violation to their honest declaration, but so far as I am concerned personally, and probably many will agree with me, I contend that the result of Secularism is Atheism, and I have no wish to avoid it in this debate. Only do not put it on all. Do not put it on the Society. There are many Atheists in the

Society, and some who are not. I try to make more every day (cheers), and I have some satisfaction in believing that my efforts are not entirely unsuccessful. The second proposition is, that Secularism is Necessitarianism. Well, suppose that be so. I do not know whether our friend means that all Necessitarianism is immoral. I think he does. Then Jonathan Edwards was immoral. I am not saying he was. I am only drawing the conclusion from Dr. McCann's proposition. There have been people Necessitarians who were not Secularists. I think they were sensible people, because I hold the doctrine of Necessitarianism must to all, who really think on the matter, be the ultimate conclusion. I do not mean by that there are not many who honestly and thoughtfully hold the opposite view. I do not mean to imply any sort of contempt for their view. On all those questions, on which the world learns more and more every day, there is a continual fluctuation in opinion as the tide goes backwards and forwards, but still, in reality, ever onwards. Every day there must be some who hold to an opinion which others more accurately discard. The only difference between myself and the Rev. Dr. McCann will be that what he means by Necessitarianism I do not mean. With that exception we are quite at one let me say. I possibly may save some trouble to the Doctor by at once conceding that I draw no distinction between what he calls mental acts and physical acts. I know no mental act that is not a physical act, but I do not, therefore, say that the physical act of a cabbage is the same as that which is now manifesting itself in my speech, any more than I say that a stone of a quarter of a pound weight which is rolled by the sea is exactly the same weight and size as the glacier slowly moving upon the top of Mont Blanc. Things are different, and when different they are not the same. (Cheers.) That is the distinction which was omitted to be drawn in the excellently able speech (one which was carefully prepared) which has just been delivered to us. Now Dr. McCann says that Necessitarianism denies that we can in any degree originate our own actions. No! It does not say "in any degree." So little does it teach you that, that we are now in another part of this building in some small degree trying to help originate the actions of next year. What we do say is this, that a man who is too fat to

get through a small hole cannot get through it, but we do not say that if he undergoes the process of Banting he cannot do so. That is, that what happens must accord with the precedent conditions. Man is one of the precedent conditions and is certainly not passive in originating and determining resultant action. We make only the difference of degree in the case of many animals, we do not locate man alone. I am pleased that considerable attention has been paid by my very talented antagonist to what I have written and said at different times. I am pleased that he thought it worth reading, and I hope others will imitate him, but I must ask him not to take for granted that a few words taken by themselves out of a debate will fairly represent the opinion I was maintaining. I am not at all complaining of the accuracy of any quotations. I am not complaining that it was unfair towards me to quote any words I may have used. I am not seeking to dissociate myself from the distinct obligation which rests on me either to maintain what I have said, or to abandon what I have said on some other occasion. I am only pointing out to you that a skilled speaker might easily take some phrase from a sermon and build a very strong argument upon it, while totally misrepresenting the sermon. I will show you one as an illustration which was quoted from the Cooper debate. "Man cannot resist the circumstances which result in volition." With a less acute person than my able antagonist I should have thought he must have misunderstood it. I know it was not intentional, but I will show you that he has misapprehended it or misappreciated it, and that he has given you an incorrect view, because he says we fancy we had resisted, and sometimes resisted so that we overcame, the temptation. Ah, then, you do not resist the volition. It is some other volition that results. You have not overcome the volition. You have not got the volition, and what is it happens if we resist? Let us take a case. The drunken man has been used to-night over and over again, and I will take that drunken man. Take the case of a man born of fairly healthy parents, and the case of a man unfortunately coming into the world with the blood poison of drink in his veins. Any medical man will tell you that science now verifies thousands of such instances, and I am sorry to say in this land. Blood poison from drink is transmitted through

more than one generation. Take the case of one so tainted from birth, who has around him associations of crime and of filth, of misery and of degradation, and take the other who has healthy organisation to start with, and who has some better knowledge of what is bright in the world than the one I have put to you, surrounded by all that is dark, and with the inherited blackness inside, and I ask you to try the resistance of those men. In some degree it is admitted the action is governed. In what degree? By the degree of the poisoned organisation given to the child at its birth; by the degree of crime that went on for generations before it was born; by the degree of the filthy atmosphere in which it breathes; by the degree of disease and wretchedness which surrounds it up to the moment of volition. By these degrees is it necessitated? The Secularist says prayer does not clear the drain. We show men how, and we give to their brains the tonic of our knowledge. Some take it better than others, some worse than others, but to all it is a new spring, a new ingredient. Men are not helplessly driven to and fro in the sense of being merely passive victims. Each one is an active drop in the waves which make up the ocean of human life, not only making up the wave but making part of its activity, acting on as well as acted on, resisting and inspiring, not dashed "helplessly" but helping to dash. Our friend (and it is a pleasure to be opposed to a gentleman able to make points good-humoredly as our friend does), our friend raised a laugh, in which I was pleased to share, about the intelligence of the cabbage-stalk, and perhaps he will talk of the admission I am now going to make. Between the cabbage and the man I know no break. Between the highest of which I know and the lowest of which I know in the scale of life I know no break. I do not mean to say any difference, but any break. I trace step by step down the ladder until I come where it is impossible for me, for want of technical knowledge, to distinguish between animal and vegetable life. Not only impossible for me, but impossible for the most skilled specialist we have. But there is a large difference between the rose and the cabbage. Yes; as there is a large difference between the Englishman and the Negro; between the Andaman and the Caucasian; and you have no right to talk

of man as though man meant the same everywhere. You have no right to put it as though they were all on one level, on one plain. There are marked degrees of differing ability, and that which is possible in volition for the Negro on given conditions, and that which is possible in volition for me on like conditions, are possibilities which are not the same, are possibilities which differ largely from each other. I have not yet time to deal with the freedom of the will.

The CHAIRMAN here intimated that the time had expired, and Mr. Bradlaugh sat down amidst cheering.

DR. MCCANN: You have had, as you always do have from Mr. Bradlaugh, a very pointed, telling and eloquent speech, but one that has not much to do with the subject for debate. He has referred me to the principles of the National Secular Society for a definition of Secularism. But surely my friend does not fall into the error of supposing that Secularism is co-extensive with the cause of Secularists; that those laws comprehend and involve the whole subject of Secularism. It must be admitted that Secularism is something far wider and far more extensive than the laws of a society existing in this country called the National Secular Society. He has no right to take the laws instituted by the members of that society for their own guidance, and call them Secularism; as well might he call the laws of the Royal Astronomical Society astronomy. Those rules which Mr. Bradlaugh has reproduced are not at all a definition of Secularism. Many of those professed objects of Secularism are in common with other isms. But I want a definition of Secularism which will separate it from all other isms. Towards achieving many of those objects I would work with heart and soul in conjunction with Mr. Bradlaugh. He has alluded to the existence of priestly intimidations at the present time. He, however, only referred to the case of coroner's inquests and has given us no illustrations of priestly intimidations. I perfectly agree with him that the oath ought to be abolished, and with him I hope the time will come when the oath will be abolished both in the courts and in Parliament. But I must have a definition of Secularism which shall differentiate it from any other ism—between that ism and my ism. Mr. Bradlaugh wants civil and religious liberty; I equally hope that

civil and religious liberty will go on widening and increasing, and becoming more powerful the longer we live. Though we disagree in some things we agree in others, and he must not call these things Secularism which, rightly and peculiarly attach also to Christianism. He also stated that Secularism, supposing it came into power to-morrow—which I do not think it will—would not impose any disabilities on any creed or claim. I hope to show you on the next evening, the qualities inherent in Secularism; to show you, for example, that it teaches persecution. My friend has told you that he does not advocate Socialism. For this there was no necessity, for I did not introduce Socialism, either directly or indirectly. As regards the Negroes and their beliefs, we will confine our attention to ourselves and leave the Negroes to look after themselves and their own beliefs. (Hisses.) There are certain matters in our belief which are in common with all human beliefs —the same fundamental conceptions—and there is the same consciousness in the Negro as in the European. He has told you that there are many Secularists who are not Atheists, but this, according to his own statement, is because they have not sufficient brains. He acknowledges that Atheism is the logical consequence of Secularism, therefore all those who are logical Secularists are Atheists, and those who are not Atheists are illogical Secularists. He states that I said that Secularists as Necessitarians are immoral. "If so," he rejoins, "Jonathan Edwards was immoral, for he was a Necessitarian." I accuse no man of immorality. I am here to attack Secularism and not Secularists. I say that Secularism teaches Necessitarianism though a Secularist may be better than his creed. There are doubtless many of them as honest and as upright as their neighbors. I am here to cast no slur upon any human being. I am talking of systems, creeds, and beliefs, and not of the persons who hold those beliefs. Mr. Bradlaugh agrees with me that Secularism is Necessitarianism though, as I understand, he differs from me in my definition of Necessitarianism; but this is an important admission. I am accused of taking certain quotations from Mr. Bradlaugh's previous debates which do not adequately represent his line of teaching. I have not done anything so foolish as to attempt to misquote him, he being too

familiar with his writings to render such an act anything but futile. With regard to the influence of Necessitarianism on our actions, I acknowledge that man is in some degree necessitated, but is also in some degree free. He can so far determine his own actions, and exercise a certain self-control. I acknowledge that man is in some degree necessitated by the circumstances of his birth, his surroundings, and his education. We cannot, for instance, expect the same high tone from one born in vice, surrounded by vice, and inheriting a vicious temperament, as we have a right to expect from anyone situated as I am myself. But whatever may have been the circumstances of man's life, there is still some degree of freedom left, and he can resist up to that degree. In the same degree as he is necessitated is he guiltless. The drunkard may have a very corrupt nature, and very strong temptations, but still he has some power to resist. That there would be more strength, more holiness, more grandeur, in the world if the poor drunkard were cultured by education and training, we acknowledge; but what I do contend is that though possessed of a corrupt nature, there is still left in a man some will to resist. None say that any person is absolutely unbiassed by circumstances, but only that under all circumstances a certain amount of freedom remains. My friend overturns his reasoning by saying that between the cabbage and the man he knows no break; that we are only higher in degree than a cabbage, and not in kind. Now the cabbage cannot determine in the smallest degree its own culture, its own nature, its own growth. The cabbage is irresponsible either for its largeness or its smallness, its beauty or reverse. Consequently, if Mr. Bradlaugh be correct, man has no power of determining his own life; so that, according to him, a cabbage and a man stand on the same level so far as freedom of volition is concerned. Mr. Watts, affirming that freedom is denied both to man and to plants, writes: "Man is as much the consequence of all the causes and circumstances which have affected him in his development previous to and since his birth as any one tree or mountain." Thus it is stated clearly that there is no power in man to resist. The whole theory of Necessitarianism is this: We cannot resist the circumstances that result in volition. They produce our motives, our motives produce our volition, and volitions produce our actions. Will Mr. Bradlaugh explain

where, according to his principle, the freedom between the antecedent and the consequent comes in? Necessitarianism says that you do whatever you are doing because you cannot help it; you live in a certain manner because you have no alternative, no power to overcome circumstances. That man has no more merit than a cabbage is acknowledged by one whose name I do not care to give, as he is dead; but I will shew it to Mr. Bradlaugh afterwards. (Cries of "Name.")

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I am sure that I do not wish anything to be kept secret.

Dr. MCCANN: It was Mr. Austin Holyoake. (Cheers.) He said, when chairman once for Mr. Bradlaugh: "He did not consider any thanks were due to him for what he might have done in a public way during the last twenty years, as he could not help the impulses of his nature; they were beyond his control; but he trusted that what he might do in the future would merit the approbation of his fellow-men." Mr. Bradlaugh will require to point out where is the freedom of will between our antecedent impulses and our subsequent actions.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: If the Rev. Dr. McCann thought that I should travel out of the line by reading to you the principles of the National Secular Society, it was his duty to tell me that when he invited me to debate, and when I told him that those were the principles I should defend. If he wished to debate Atheism, he would not have found me reluctant. I am an Atheist, and I am not ashamed of my Atheism; but my duty here is to defend Secularism. My duty is not only to state my own views as clear as I can, but fairly to represent to you, as far as possible, the general consensus of opinion amongst Secularists. Now, Dr. McCann asks me for a definition which will separate Secularism from all other isms. I can separate it from some isms. It is unnecessary to-night that I should separate it from all. I separate it from Christianism by saying that it holds the opinion that the beliefs of Christians are not absolutely or at all necessary to morality. That is a definition which, I hope, will separate it, and if the definition is required to be explained I will endeavor to explain it; but I will not depart from what he has mapped out for debate unless he wishes it. Then the Rev. Dr. McCann said that we are conscious; and while he said he would leave the Negroes to look after

themselves, he also stated that the consciousness of man was alike in the Negro and the European. I demur to the statement that the consciousness of the Negro is the consciousness of the European; and I am ready to prove that there is no such identity, supposing that that is a point which my antagonist thinks ought to be examined in this debate. Then he says he does not talk about men, but the doctrines; but he objects to my giving you the doctrine. He won't defend the doctrine, and he won't talk about the men. Then he says, if I understood him correctly, that man has a certain degree of freedom of volition. I affirm that man has volitions, and I affirm that each volition of each individual is different from every other volition of that man; and if our friend will select two cases that he would like explained, I will endeavor, so far as I am able, to give the best explanation that occurs to me. The Rev. Dr. McCann has told us that the man born with a low nature is guiltless. I agree in that—that is, guiltless towards whatever gave him that low nature. (Cheers.) If he means anything different from this, I want to know what the word "guiltless" means. Let me say we have had the word sin used several times. Do you mean sin in the shape of disobedience to some regulation of society to which the individual belongs? If you mean more than that, what does it mean? It is of no use using language as sound-coin for concealment of ideas. It will be of still less use our each using language which has a different meaning in our different mouths. I am sure our friend would not use language to conceal ideas; but I am afraid that we are both using words attaching to them different meanings, and therefore we cannot arrive at any good result. Then he said the cabbage and man differ in kind. He did not explain what he meant by "in kind." Did he mean that we are not to judge the one as we should judge the other; that we should not judge them as being both phænomena of the same universe? If he did not mean that what did he mean? Of course when you take different things, each presenting different characteristics, we must, upon those different characteristics, form our judgment. Difference in kind between a cabbage and a man sounds as though it had some semblance of truth about it, but when you go step by step until you reach the lowest recognised form of animal life; then take the lowest

form of recognised vegetable life; then trace from these, when you find animal life without power of locomotion, and vegetable life with it, then you begin to wonder what "difference in kind" means. Our friend was perfectly correct when he distinguished the cabbage from man in degree; that the cabbage has not the power of determining in the smallest degree—I do not dispute it. Then we had some talk about freedom, and he said that freedom—(I am going back to the first speech)—in the language of Necessitarianism, means freedom from physical restraint. First, we know of no restraint which is not physical. Every thought, every phase of the mind, is impossible except as a phase of the activity of the physical organisation with which it is associated. I deny that you can separate from the thinker the thought; from the willer, the will; and when the word "consciousness" is used, it expresses, not an entity, but a phase, which varies daily and hourly—a phase which fluctuates with each new perception, with each new reflection upon that perception. The consciousness of a man to-day is not the consciousness of that man yesterday. Take the case of a child; before it has reached the age of twenty years, new motives created with new thoughts—new motives created with new education—new circumstances growing with new knowledge—influence it, and that man to-day is as different as can be from what the child was twenty years before. So that you may have the individual of six years old and the individual of twenty years old willing in an absolutely contradictory fashion, under what were apparently the same conditions, from which the will previously resulted, because the individual of twenty-six years old is a different individual, with different thinking ability. He is different in capacity and will-power altogether. Then our friend was good enough to say Necessitarianism must be Fatalism. It is true he was frank enough to read my denial of this and my explanation of my denial. There is one case in which Necessitarianism must be Fatalism. Supposing a man happen to believe in an omnipotent ruler of the universe that decreed everything, the Necessitarianism would be Fatalism, because what would be happening would be happening according to a certain decree which could not be avoided; but Necessitarianism is not Fatalism when it teaches that although under given con-

ditions disease is necessitated, that the conditions may be changed, the disease may be avoided, and the knowledge of what will result from certain conditions, is in itself a motive pushing the individual to endeavor to create new conditions. Then he says: "Oh, you cannot alter the conditions of your present life." That is not true. They are altered day by day. The main drainage system, for example, is an alteration. Well, then he says how would you deal with the thief? You would have us say you are the victim of your antecedents. But this is exactly what you do say; and, if your thief be young enough to mould, you try with new conditions to efface the antecedents, and you seek to cure him of, rather than punish him for, his crime. What is the whole of your reformatory legislation for, if not for this? Well, then he says why did I go to a maniac for an illustration of inaccurate consciousness? You always go to abnormal conditions if you want to give illustrations which shall be striking. If you only go to ordinary conditions it is often impossible to distinguish sufficiently accurately. But he says the maniac's consciousness is all right; only his interpretation is wrong. How do you distinguish between the consciousness you have, and the interpretation of that consciousness? I deny that it is impossible to make any such distinguishment. There may be inaccurate expressions of thought, either intentional or unintentional, arising partially through the inability to explain yourselves to others, or it may arise from their inability to understand you; but there is no such distinguishment between consciousness and interpretation of it to yourself, as our friend puts it; but he says: "I know I am free;" so does the maniac know he is Emperor of China. Do you know you are free? "Yes; each one knows that each is in some degree free—in some degree the author of his own actions." In some degree? Only one leg tied. In some degree? In what degree? Free must be free. Limited freedom cannot be introduced like limited liability. Our friend says, in illustration of his freedom: I can sin if I will. What do you mean by "sin" in this phrase? and what do you mean by "will"? (Loud cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. McCann:—Mr. Bradlaugh, in a large portion of his address, had it not been for the great dissimilarity of his voice, would have led me to imagine that it was myself

speaking, for he was so thoroughly in many points echoing my own sentiments. (Laughter.) Mr. Bradlaugh affirms that man has volition. That is not denied by anyone. But the question is, has he freedom of volition? It is not a question of whether a man has a will, but can man will his own actions in any degree? Does freedom of will originate man's actions? I affirm that man has freedom of volition, which is a totally different matter from volition as understood by Mr. Bradlaugh, and I require Mr. Bradlaugh to show me where the break occurs between the antecedent that produces the circumstances resulting in volition and the consequents in action that follow it; for there the freedom is introduced. He represents me as saying that a man with a low nature is guiltless, what I said was that he is guiltless in so far as he is constrained, but no further. All mankind have volition; but Mr. Bradlaugh says that they have not freedom of volition; that they are as the cabbage, which differs not in kind from man. He has, he says, gone step by step from the lowest organisation to the highest—that is to man—and he can find no break in the order; and therefore he wants to know what I mean by "differing in kind" from the cabbage. I reply, that if man has something of which we can find nothing similar in kind in the cabbage—no trace, for example, of its being free—then, so far, man differs in kind from the cabbage. In other words, man has freedom of selection, while the cabbage has none whatever in even the smallest possible degree. This is difference in kind; man can choose between two courses presented to him, while the cabbage cannot. You must begin somewhere; start where you like—start at Adam if you like and go through the whole universe, and the same thing will be abundantly confirmed. Then Mr. Bradlaugh says, "Freedom is freedom from physical restraint." He knows no restraint that is not physical. Well, that is exactly what I tell you is Secular freedom; not freedom of mind, not freedom of self-determination; not freedom of self-control—only freedom where no external restraint exists to compel us in one direction rather than in another. This is not mental restraint, but physical restraint, and therefore its absence is not freedom in the true sense of the term. Then he said an extraordinary and unphilosophical thing—that consciousness varies daily and hourly, and is not the same in any two human beings. I must say that this is the most

startling statement I have ever heard. Why consciousness is the one thing that never varies. You never find a man conscious that he did not exist. How does Mr. Bradlaugh know that he exists? It is only as consciousness tells him. If consciousness lies in one case it might lie in all. I can only know that I am speaking to you by my consciousness. If consciousness be untrustworthy, I am not sure even of this, and therefore all reasoning is useless, and all debate waste of time. We cannot have knowledge of that which does not exist. He is opposed to the best Psychologists who affirm that to deny the veracity of consciousness is to commit philosophical suicide. Then he says that I affirm that we cannot alter the conditions of the present day, and he says that we can alter those conditions by education and by culture. That is exactly what I say. In altering the conditions of a man—in educating that man—I alter the conditions of his life. Take a child, educate it, and it may give it a better character. This is what the libertarians affirm. But the necessitarians say that we cannot alter those conditions voluntarily.

Mr. Bradlaugh tells us why he goes to a maniac for his illustrations — because the abnormal conditions are more striking. That is, he goes to an insane man to illustrate the condition of a sane one; to explain the mental state of healthy mind by the conditions of a lunatic! You go to a mad man to see what a mad man is; to a sane man to see what a sane man is. He affirms that if the interpretation of consciousness be wrong, consciousness itself must be wrong, because consciousness is simply knowledge of a fact. Consciousness gives the knowledge of personal existence. I am conscious that I exist, but I cannot be conscious that I exist as a soldier, tailor, or merchant. Consciousness is knowledge. You cannot know that which does not exist. I know that I am free; I do not infer it. It is knowledge of fact. If consciousness is not true how can you know that.

Mr. Bradlaugh objects to my statement that we are free in some degree. He says, "What do you mean by limited freedom? If we are free we are free." Well, of course we are. We are free in so far as we are not constrained—constrained, that is, up to a certain point, but beyond that point we are free. I am so far constrained in my mode of

life by my surroundings, but that constraint is limited. I have motives and a will. Reason as we may upon this, the ultimate appeal must be to consciousness, and I now appeal to the consciousness of everyone here that if you raise your arm is it you that do so and not your physical antecedents? There is freedom in the physical as well as freedom in the mental acts. But Mr. Bradlaugh will tell you that there is no freedom in either. Every act differs in kind. I am free to select; the lower orders are not free to select —the cabbage for instance; the unconscious world are not free to select, the conscious are.

Mr. Bradlaugh has assented to my first proposition, that Secularism is Atheism; also to my second proposition, that it is Necessitarianism. Therefore, if you are consistent Secularists you must be Necessitarians. He only differs from me in the third proposition so far as to say that consciousness is not reliable; that it varies from day to day; but I hold the philosophical principle that the veracity of consciousness is the basis of philosophy, and therefore in denying this Secularism is unphilosophical.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: If repeating over and over again what I do not say as though I had said it (I do not mean to say there is any wilful misrepresentation, I am sure it is unintentional), will make me say it, then, undoubtedly, our friend is making great progress. There were one or two questions I put to him which he omitted to answer—what he meant by sin? and what he meant by will? It is not true that I affirm one volition for man. I affirm volitions. With me the word volition expresses a state of mind, a mental phase, which is also a physical phase, because every mental phase is a physical phase; nor is it true that I speak of our consciousness as if each had the same consciousness. With me the word consciousness expresses a varying phase of the mind day by day, the measure of each man's knowledge, of his immediate perceptions, of his remembered perceptions, of his reflections upon his remembered perceptions, of his comparison of his perceptions together, of his comparison of his memory of perceptions with others of these, or with his immediate perceptions and of his conceptions founded on such perceptions. These make up his consciousness, an ever varying quantity. Dr. McCann says that the leading Psychologists disagree with me. I am sorry,

for if that be true I am afraid I have not read them, then, with sufficient attention. Some few Psychologists I have read agree with me, and if it is to become a question of what is the evidence of Psychologists, I shall, if required, be ready to put a dozen in the box—as to this I shall be glad to know; but I think it will be better for us, in any case, to agree what we mean here by the words we use. Dr. McCann took an illustration which seems to me to show that he does not yet apprehend what the point between us is. He says that man has the power of selection and the cabbage has none. Let us see. The cabbage is planted; between the seed and the sair is a stone. It grows by degrees, it reaches the stone—but because of it cannot reach the air. It goes round the stone to the air, because it has some capacity of selecting a route; it does not go in a direct line because its capacity is limited by the stone, and if a man were under a two ton stone his capacity would be also limited. Well, then, we are told that consciousness is simply knowledge; but consciousness, we are also told, never varies. Do you mean to put the proposition, that the knowledge of individuals never varies? I do not think that Dr. McCann would say that. But if the knowledge does vary, and consciousness is knowledge—consciousness must vary. (Cheers.) He says that, according to me, consciousness tells lies. I have never said anything of the kind. I do not regard consciousness as being a separate entity able to tell me anything, but I do say that my consciousness may be, and often is, an inaccurate estimate of phænomena. Go to a shooting range and if you are not used to measuring distances you might think that the distance is 400 yards, it would be so according to your consciousness; but a man with a more accurate ability of judging distances from his consciousness, will tell you that it is 300 yards. There is no subject which you can put to yourselves as to which a better trained consciousness cannot give you a better result. Then, so little is it true that the distinction is quite accurate as to the limited capacity of selection, that while we found the cabbage coming through the ground to the light and finding a stone in its way, was turned, warped and twisted, we find not unlike limitations of capacity for selection in man himself. We find, for example, that if a bullet found its way into a man, that then the

growing tissue has only a limited capacity of selection, and is warped and distorted. I need not refer to the case of President Garfield, but go to any hospital and you will find the same thing. Things like cabbages and men are different, and things which differ cannot be the same, but allowing for these differences you get evidence that all results have to be similarly related to the conditions by which they are determined. Nor is it true that every human being is always conscious. He may be made temporarily as unconscious as a cabbage, a poker on his skull may do it. A hundred illustrations might be given of unconsciousness producible by drugs, but I will not weary you with them. I will, however, go a little further and take the illustration which has been given. A man says I will not be useful to my fellow-men, and another says, I will do all the good I can. It is not true that the desire to do good or ill is free in man, or that even with the desire it may have free outcome in volition. There are many who desire to do good but cannot, owing to the circumstances by which they are surrounded; look at a man who is crushed by disease—look at a man who has not inherited physical strength sufficient, who has not the brain quality or ability to think accurately. These men are all limited. But Dr. McCann says, "I am constrained so far but no farther." Tell me how far? and when you speak again in your opening speech tell me how far you are constrained by your inherited qualities, and tell me how for you are constrained by the circumstances which surround you now, and by those changing circumstances which have surrounded you since birth; tell me how far the average man in a city like that in which we are speaking is constrained, and how far he is free. Then our friend is good enough to put it as though I have at some time or other used words which imply less respect for the thinking abilities of other people than I ought to have employed. Well it is perfectly true that I do use strong words. If repeating these makes the case any stronger against me, I will not complain. But otherwise it can serve no useful purpose in this debate. I am content to argue the question out fairly and reasonably. If anyone were to pick up stray words which seem to imply that the speaker used at one time harsher words

from those he had used at another, then I say that such a discussion can do no good. I have had so many debates that I would prefer that the discussion should be useful to others, if not to ourselves. That the discussion of the freedom of the will may be in some degree useful, I will promise that on the next occasion I will submit to you what at least some of the best Psychologists have to say on the subject. I do not mean that I limit my views to the best Psychologists, but I go to those men who have devoted themselves to the study of a special class of phænomena, and have formed their opinions upon what is put before them. We are approaching the end of this evening's debate. Up to the present there has not been one word that either of us need wish unsaid. I occupy to-night rather an usual position for me—the defensive. My friend has a right to attack me on any point he will, and he exercises that right with no unfairness. Let me say that it is many years since Dr. McCann and I met in debate. Let us try as far as possible to speak not only to those who are present, but equally to those who will read the debate. Let us convey to them the impression that we are struggling for the truth, and striving to wrestle truth out of the diverse propositions advanced. We shall have great success if we can add but ever so little to human thought. Truth keeps increasing day by day, and there is more possibility of judging what is truth in the world at the present time than there was ten thousand years ago. Let us in this discussion, at least, endeavor to aid men in the search for truth (cheers). I accepted the invitation which the Rev. Dr. McCann gave me to meet him in this discussion, because I knew him to be a gentleman of ability and high repute, and because it would give me an opportunity of saying something about Secularism which I might not otherwise have had the like opportunity of saying. What I have to say I shall endeavor to make as clear as possible, and its value I must leave for your deliberation and judgment. (Cheers.)

Dr. McCann proposed and Mr. Bradlaugh seconded a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was unanimously passed and briefly acknowledged.

SECOND NIGHT.—MRS. BESANT in the Chair.

MRS. BESANT, in opening the proceedings, expressed a hope that the audience would make her work as easy as they had made it for the chairman on the previous occasion. The subject for that night's discussion was, of course, a continuation of that of last week, Dr. McCann maintaining that Secularism was Unphilosophical, Immoral and Anti-social, Mr. Bradlaugh standing on the defensive throughout. She would especially ask them not to interrupt either of the speakers with expressions of dissent. Each disputant had the right and the duty of doing the very best he could for his own side; and, while it was always fair to cheer as much as they liked, it was not fair, and they had no right, to hiss or groan at anything which might be said on either side to which they objected. That was the one thing they wished to avoid. (Applause.)

The Rev. Dr. MCCANN, in rising to reopen the debate, was greeted with cheers. He said: I resume the debate this evening by acceding to the request made by Mr. Bradlaugh in his last speech last evening, that I would define will and sin. Will I define as the power of self-determination, and volition as an act of the will directing our present activity. Sin was only casually introduced into my first speech, as it formed part of a quotation from Mr. Bradlaugh. It is not at all necessary in the present discussion, and therefore I am content to mean by it whatever Mr. Bradlaugh meant when he used the word.

I now proceed to reply to what my friend has advanced in opposition to my views, or rather to show how slightly he has opposed me and how completely he has corroborated and illustrated my position, especially in his concluding speech last night. To do this, however, at all satisfactorily, I must go slightly back on what he stated earlier in the evening. He then said: "The only difference between myself and Dr. McCann will be that what he means by Necessitarianism I do not mean." I now show that this difference does not exist, and must be pardoned if I dwell a few minutes on this subject, as it is of the utmost importance. The only alleged difference is thus stated: "Dr. McCann says that Necessitarianism denies that we can in any degree originate

our own actions. No! It does not say 'in any degree.'" According to my friend, therefore, Necessitarianism acknowledges that we can in some degree originate or self-determine our own actions. But Necessitarianism cannot admit that which is not necessitated. Necessitarianism cannot be Libertarianism. If there be any degree of the latter the former must be absent; to adopt Mr. Bradlaugh's own expressive and uncontrovertible words, "Things are different, and when different they are not the same." (Laughter.) Now, I believe there is no man in England who can better distinguish things that differ than our friend, and I believe there is not a lawyer in England who has opposed him who would not say the same with a sigh for his client—(laughter and applause)—and a chuckle for himself as he pocketed his fees. I was, consequently, somewhat surprised at Mr. Bradlaugh's confusion on this point, but that confusion soon passed away, and he remained clear to the last—on my side. (Laughter.) I have read most carefully all he said, for I consider it due to my subject, my audience and my opponent to be as accurate and careful in the matter as I can, and I do not find one single illustration that does not confirm my statement that Necessitarianism denies all self-origination of action, the almost last illustration being the weightiest of all, where he places a brother man under a stone weighing two tons. I am charged with misapprehending his assertion that "Man cannot resist the circumstances which result in volition." The misapprehension is on my friend's part, who, apparently, and considering the rapidity with which I spoke, most excusably, supposed me to say that we resisted the volition. I, however, never said anything so absurd. I referred solely to the circumstances "that resulted in volition," a resistance which I hold not only to be possible, but to be a fact of almost daily occurrence in many lives. Mr. Bradlaugh has asked me how far we are constrained by our inherited qualities and by the circumstances that surround us. This is a question impossible to answer, because no two men are in nature or circumstances exactly alike. He might as well ask me how much are men educated. Each man must answer the question for himself. We now proceed to the illustrations my friend has brought forward to make clear his view of Necessitarianism. In reply to my remark that man has the power of selection while the

cabbage has not, he replies: "Let us see. The cabbage is planted—it grows, and by degrees it reaches a stone, but it cannot reach the air. It goes round the stone because its capacity is limited, and if a man were under a two-ton stone his capacity would be also limited." I should say it would be altogether extinguished. But let us look at this plant first. Because the plant cannot go through the stone, but goes round it, it is said to have a power of selection, limited, no doubt, but still existent. I say the plant has no capacity whatever of selection, that is of self-determination. Its going round the stone is determined for it, and not by it—that is, it is necessitated. The man under the stone is, however, still more necessitated, for he has no power to move at all, either through the stone or round it, so he is under the necessity of remaining where he is, but most assuredly not willingly, for I fancy if alive he would get away if he could. In both cases the restraint or the freedom are necessitated completely, there being no self-action possible. Another case similar to these is that of those who desire to do good, but, owing to the circumstances by which they are surrounded, such as disease or weakness, are unable. In the hurry of speech Mr. Bradlaugh apparently overlooked the very important distinction between desire and will. The weakest man in the world might say "I desire to do good." We should understand his wish and respect him for it; but if, while unable to leave his bed, he said "I will go forth and do good," we should think him mad and keep a sharp look out on him. Desire and will differ, and "things that differ are not the same." One more illustration of my friend's, and I have done with this portion of my reply. Mr. Bradlaugh said: "Men are not helplessly driven to and fro in the sense of being merely passive victims. Each one is an active drop in the waves which make up the ocean of human life, not only making up the wave, but making part of its activity." Well, but what liberty has the drop in all this? Is it not necessitated to receive whatever impulse may be imparted to it, and to pass that on without diminution or increase? And this is what I have been contending for all along—that Necessitarianism denies all self-determination. Drops in the ocean of life! No! We are not. They are not only utterly helpless in all they do, helpless in all their activities when they

are dashing, as when they are frozen, and they are all alike. We are as drops, are we? There sits one man reading his morning paper—he sees that Dr. Aveling has been dismissed from his lectureship, and he says "What a pity," and in the same breath asks for some more buttered toast. (Laughter.) That is one "drop." Mr. Bradlaugh reads the same, and leaping from his chair exclaims, "The rascals! it is a shame"—(cheers)—and I perfectly agree with him it was a shame. (Loud cheers.) He continues, "I shall expose it throughout the land," and so he scatters letters like fireballs, and comes here to orate in a voice of thunder and with the force of a cataract. (Much laughter.) That is the other "drop," and pardon me if I can't help fancying that there was some self-determination in the last "drop" at any rate. (Renewed laughter.)

Thus, therefore, stands the case so far as Necessitarianism is concerned. I stated my views as to what Necessitarianism is, quoting from John Stuart Mill and Professor Bain in support of them. Apparently I did this correctly, as my friend took exception to only one point, the denial of any liberty except external liberty, but so far from substantiating his objection, every single illustration he has used has altogether corroborated my statement and confirmed my views, so that as far as we have gone this debate might be called—not McCann *versus* Bradlaugh, but McCann *plus* Bradlaugh. (Laughter and applause).

I now come to what has been said by my friend about the veracity of Consciousness, especially in his last speech. Whatever difficulty there may be in placing this in its true light will arise from the very peculiar manner in which certain words have been used, such as "knowledge." Mr. Bradlaugh defines Consciousness to be "the varying phase of the mind from day to day," the measure of man's knowledge from his immediate and remembered perceptions, reflections, comparisons, etc. In knowledge Mr. Bradlaugh apparently includes fancies, blunders, ignorant errors of all kinds, as in the case of the man said to be conscious that a target was 400 yards away while it was only 300 yards, or when the maniac knows he is Emperor of China! To me, knowledge means certainty. No wonder Mr. Bradlaugh says that Consciousness is inaccurate, when to him it expresses the measure of all the contents of the mind, includ-

ing the vagaries of the maniac. Increase of knowledge may also, according to this teaching, be a most undesirable thing, as it may mean an increase of insanity, or nonsense, or error. I believe this is a fair—nay, a necessary inference from what my friend has said. I do not much care how hard I hit, but I do care about hitting fairly. (Applause.) If this be his conception of Consciousness I should like to know its use, and also how he could get on without it. Also, if there be a standard of truth, where is it to be found? and if there be no truth on what he bases his arguments, why he gives himself the trouble of arguing at all? To me, as I have already stated, Consciousness never varies, and Consciousness is Knowledge; but Mr. Bradlaugh here became somewhat confused, for he reasons as though I had said all Knowledge was Consciousness. All eagles are birds, but all birds are not eagles. Consciousness may or may not include all knowledge: on this point psychologists differ. For the purpose of this debate, I define Consciousness as the Knowledge of our own mental states. In this discussion I have nothing whatever to do with the question whether we can be also conscious of anything beyond those states. That we are conscious of mental states cannot, I imagine, be denied, even by Mr. Bradlaugh. Again, I should like to ask him a question. How does he know—no! it will not do to say "know," as that may be imagination—how is he certain he has mental states, or any states at all, if Consciousness be inaccurate? When I say that Consciousness never varies, I mean as to its nature. Consciousness is Consciousness all the world over and at all times. The states we are conscious of do vary from day to day. Yesterday I may have been conscious of misery—to-day of happiness; yesterday of ignorance—to-day of learning; yesterday of doubt—to-day of faith; but the Consciousness in each case has been true, for I was in the states of which I was then conscious, as I could not have been conscious of them had the states not been there. If we followed Mr. Bradlaugh's teaching we might say that while we were conscious of being unutterably happy we were really unutterably miserable, Consciousness being inaccurate. Once again, I affirm that Consciousness must be pronounced veracious, or philosophy is impossible; consequently whatever system contradicts Consciousness is

thereby proved unphilosophical and false. Secularism does this; therefore, I hold it to be unphilosophical and false.

I now come to the fresh matter for this evening. The subject for this evening being the Morality of Secularism—a subject, it will be acknowledged, of the utmost importance. I hope Mrs. Besant, who to-night occupies the chair, will excuse me for quoting her, but I have to deal with Secularism, and I do not know that I could quote a higher or a better authority. (Applause.) As Mrs. Besant truly says, ("True Basis of Morality," p. 2): "That which touches morality touches the heart of society; a high and pure morality is the life-blood of humanity." (Cheers.) I perfectly agree with her. My next proposition is consequently one that it behoves me very clearly to prove, as it brings against Secularism the very serious charge that it would poison the life-blood of humanity, for the next proposition is this, that Secularism is immoral; and by this I do not mean merely that Secularism is without morality, but that it is against morality. Understand that I am not bringing any charge against Secularists, with them I have nothing whatever to do. They may be, and doubtless are, as moral as other men, but I shall show that they are moral, not in virtue of their Secularism, but in spite of it. I cannot, of course, in the time at my disposal exhaust the subject, or treat it with anything like the fullness its importance demands, but I hope to say enough to justify the position I have taken.

What then is morality from the Secularist's point of view? I searched the "Freethinkers' Text Book" naturally hoping to find any information I needed regarding Secularism, but here, strange to say, I was doomed to disappointment, for I could not find anything whatever on the subject of Secular morality. It may be there, but I could not discover it; in fact it seemed to me the strangest "Text Book" that ever I read. There was much peculiar writing about other matters, but very little about the positive principles of Freethought. I was, therefore, compelled to search elsewhere, and turned next to Mrs. Besant's "True Basis of Morality," and here I read (page 3): "Morality in the deeper and truer meaning of the word means harmony with natural order; physical morality is harmony with all those laws, obedience to which results in physical vigor; and

moral morality is harmony with all those laws, obedience to which result in moral vigors." The only attempt at a definition here is that of physical morality, which means keeping oneself physically strong, so that eating a chop is a moral action; but we are not told what moral morality is, nay we are rather puzzled by it, for when we speak of moral morality we imply that there might be a morality that was not moral. True, the authoress speaks of "moral vigor," but she does not tell us what moral vigor is. Elsewhere (p. 9) she writes: "That which promotes the general happiness is right; that which lessens or undermines the general happiness is wrong. These are the axioms on which a true morality must be grounded." Still, there is no definition; we are only told on what it must be grounded. I know full well what, by the necessity of the case, the definition must be; still I wish to have it in words, and those words I find in the debate between Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. King, where Mr. Bradlaugh says, in effect (King Debate, p. 17) that the creed which he accepts as to morals is Utility. It could not be otherwise—there is no other moral creed possible to an Atheist; and this I shall show is not a creed as to morals at all. Now, in the first place, Utilitarianism regards only the uses of things—it concerns itself alone with the results of actions and ignores motives altogether. According to it a moral action is a useful one. Never mind why it was performed, if the tendency of the action was towards human happiness, all is well. According to it the moral man is he who does the useful thing; but I maintain that this is not in accordance with our judgments. We judge a man, not according to the character of the action, but according to the motive prompting it when we know that motive. I care not how useful that action may be, when we know the motive to be a bad one we call the man a bad and immoral man. That cannot be true morality which totally ignores all consideration of motive, as Utilitarianism necessarily does. Again, all personal actions are not necessarily moral even when they contribute to the pleasures of others. If I be a musician and play to amuse another in order that I may pocket so many guineas, it is surely a violation of all our laws of thought to call that a moral action on my part. It may be prudent, or it may be useful, but who, apart from the demands of theory, would call it moral? If, on the

other hand, I play or sing to sooth suffering, or to aid a scheme of benevolence, I am doing not only a useful but also a moral act; for, let this ever be remembered that, while all moral acts are useful, all useful acts are not moral. It does appear to me exceedingly strange how any can persuade themselves that they are correct when they assert that every action which aids happiness, pleasure and agreeableness is, therefore, moral, for all these are the same in Utilitarianism, as is shown by Mrs. Besant's phrase "physical morality," and also by the fact that they are used as synonymous terms by Utilitarian writers. If this be true, the eating of an apple, the preference of grouse to tripe for dinner, the selection of champagne rather than table beer to drink—are all moral actions—(laughter)—and moral because they give us pleasure. It may be said I treat this lightly. I do; because it seems impossible to treat this aspect of morality seriously. It may be the morality of Secularism, but it is not the morality of consciousness, and therefore it is not morality at all. John Stuart Mill felt the unreality of this conception of morality, and although a leader in the school of Utilitarianism, he could not be logically consistent. He was so true to his humanity that he became false to his philosophy, by adding quality of happiness to quantity, and so abandoning the whole position. Apart, however, from all question of motive and quality of pleasure, the very words we use show us that utility and morality are not the same thing. We are perfectly conscious that when we use the word "right" we do not mean useful—that when we describe an action as moral we do not mean only pleasant. That the right, the useful, and the agreeable, denote different qualities of action. Even Hume confesses this when he says: "Had nature made no original constitution of the mind, the words honorable and shameful, lovely and odious, noble and despicable, had never had place in any language; nor could politicians, had they invented these terms, ever have been able to render them intelligible, or make them convey an idea to the audience." And in this he is quite correct. If there be no difference between morality and utility—whence came the two words? Let our Secularist friends be consistent in this matter and banish all such words as "right and wrong," "moral and and immoral," and confine themselves to the words that

express their meaning such as "useful," "prudent," "pleasant," "agreeable," and so on; and if they do, I fancy their system will not require much further refutation, but they know this full well, and so they dare not be true to their own teachings. But, further, this system is called the "selfish system," and truly, because selfishness is the only motive force it can bring to bear on its disciples with any hope of success. You may tell a man to do his best to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number. He has, however, a perfect right to ask you why he should. He may tell you he does not care for the happiness of the greatest number, or any number except Number One. (Laughter.) In that case there is no alternative but to appeal to his selfishness and try to persuade him that by helping others to happiness he is helping himself—but this is selfishness pure and simple. To imagine that mankind will love their neighbors as themselves and study the happiness of others rather than their own, with no better theory than Utilitarianism to inspire them, is to imagine that which will not be borne out by facts. Mr. John Stuart Mill acknowledges this in so many words where he says (page 137), "the idea of the pain of another is naturally painful; the idea of the pleasure of another is naturally pleasure." Mr. Bradlaugh affirmed the same thing still more explicitly in his debate with Mr. Hutchings (page 49) where he states, "We Secularists say that the act which does not tend to the happiness of your fellows, does not tend to your own, and is wrong." That is, it is not pleasant, then why does he not say so? His next sentence is significant. "Any attempt to murder your fellow man does not tend to his happiness, and does not, therefore, tend to your own." Certainly I do not know any case where the attempt to murder adds to the happiness of the victim, but there are cases where it does add to the happiness, such as it is, of the murderer. Surely, Mr. Bradlaugh does not forget his friends the Thugs? Apart from them, however, our friend tells us that the attempt to murder will not add to our own happiness, and therefore had better not be indulged in. And this is what Secularists call morality! Others would call it by a very different name. (Applause.)

Mr. Bradlaugh, who was received with loud cheers, said: Let me first point out to you that some of you have

utterly disregarded the appeal made to you by Mrs. Besant in interrupting Dr. McCann at several points of his speech by expressions of dissent. While it is perfectly justifiable to applaud Dr. McCann it is quite out of order for anyone to express an opinion of contradiction. Dr. McCann has told you that I had forgotten my friends the Thugs. Well! I have so wide a circle of friends that I can hardly help forgetting some of them occasionally, but Dr. McCann having reminded me of the Thugs I will proceed to deal with them. The Thugs afford instances where, applying Dr. McCann's contention, a bad deed done with a good motive becomes good. The Thug believes that it is good and that his goddess desires that he should do as he does to the unwary traveller he guides, and with this good motive he strangles—say, Dr. McCann—and according to Dr. McCann the good motive governs the action, and he has no right to complain. (Laughter.) There is one thing which Dr. McCann forgot in the interesting and able speech he has just delivered to you, and that is he forgot to give you a definition of morality. Dr. McCann has been good enough to tell us what it is not, and if we go on with the negatives, by a process of elimination we may hope at last to get at what it is; but I would suggest to him that the more desirable and speedier method would be for him to tell us what he holds morality to be. We are told by Dr. McCann that he has looked through a great number of our writings without getting a definition. Will he permit me to refer him to the first speech which I made in this debate, in which it was clearly laid down by me that morality must be tested by utility. He appears, however, to have overlooked this definition, which was drawn up and endorsed by a national meeting of Secularists, and complains that in searching through our writings he cannot find the positive principles of Secularism. I do not complain that he has read from my debates, because I hope for good results from the reading. We are told that drinking champagne instead of a glass of beer is moral with the Secularist, because it is pleasurable, and we are told that Mr. Mill was inconsistent because he added quality to pleasure as well as taking quantity. But may not rather an objector be unfair when he takes away every quality from pleasure except those that suit him, and then says we only mean by it what he chooses

to leave? "Will is the power of self-determination"—the power of whom? The power of what, is it? Upon what ground exercised? By what and in what manner? "Individuals differ"—then will does not mean the same thing in any two individuals. But let us follow this a little. We are told that sin means—whatever I choose it should mean. But I don't choose it should mean anything! Sin in the theological sense has no meaning with me whatever. I can understand offence against the laws, but if you mean sin in the sense of an act originating in the will of an actor entirely apart from and independent of all circumstances extrinsic to that will, then that is to me a phrase without meaning. We are told that it is impossible to say how far men are acted on, as no two men are exactly alike. Is not that an entire abandonment of the whole position? Then again will is distinguished from volition, but I confess I do not understand the distinction as drawn; and the distinguishment is absurd, because here will is spoken of as if will were an entity, and as though volition were some action of that entity. The plant, we are told, has no power of selection. Mrs. Besant, who is much better versed in botany than myself, reminds me that there are some plants which have tendrils which they push into holes, and if they find the holes unsatisfactory to the tendrils they draw them out and try some other. I ask Dr. McCann to describe to me what he considers this? Capacity? or selection? or what? Then we are told in the definition of consciousness that knowledge means certainty. Absolute certainty or relative certainty? If relative, to what and to whom? Then we are told that consciousness is defined as "the knowledge of our own mental states." I ask Dr. McCann to give one case of a mental state in which, and to state by what, he distinguishes between the mental state and the consciousness itself. Then he asked me how I am certain that I have any mental states at all if consciousness is inaccurate. I have never said that all consciousness was inaccurate. On the last occasion Dr. McCann declared that the view I put forward of consciousness was one which was held by no psychologist. In the first volume of *Mind* there is an article by the late George Henry Lewes on "What is Sensation?" and that acute writer answered: "It means sometimes the simple reaction of a sensory organ—as in a sensation of color or of tem-

perature. It sometimes means a complex of many reactions —usually called perceptions—as in a sensation of sight. It sometimes means only one element in a judgment; at other times it means the judgment which groups the present impression with the revived impressions of the other sensory organs," and he adds: "consciousness stands for sensibility in general and also for a particular mode of sensibility, known as reflection, attention or thought." In another article in *Mind*, vol. 2, on "Consciousness and Unconsciousness," the same able thinker says: "Organisms really differ in complexity, yet because they also agree in the cardinal conditions of vitality, among which sensibility is one, we conclude that they all have feeling; but the feeling of the one will differ from that of another, according to the complexity of the sentient mechanism in each. The perfection of this mechanism lies in the co-ordination of its parts, and the consensus of its sentient activities; and disturbance of that consensus must cause a modification in the total consciousness; and when the disturbance is profound the modification is marked by such terms as 'insanity,' 'loss of consciousness,' 'insensibility.' These terms do not imply that the sentient organs have lost their sensibility, but only that the disturbed mechanism has no longer its normal consensus, no longer its normal state of consciousness. Each organ is active in its own way so long as its own mechanism if preserved; but the united action of the organs having been disturbed, their resultant function has been altered." Professor Herzen (of Florence) affirms consciousness to be resultant from special molecular movement induced in the central nervous elements either by an impression from without, conveyed to them by afferent nerves, or by a reflex sensation from within—consciousness, according to Professor Herzen, accompanying the functional disintegration of the nervous elements. W. L. Davidson, in *Mind* for 1881, says with great clearness: "Consciousness is awakeness. In every moment of our conscious being, we exist in some definite state or other. Now we are absorbed in thought, now we are engaged in action, now we are experiencing sensation; but whatever the state at any particular instant may be, it is that particular state and nothing else. There is not both the state and the consciousness of it; the state and the consciousness are identi-

cal." As Dr. McCann contends that consciousness is one and invariable, I will draw his attention to a case recorded in the *Revue Scientifique* for May 20th, 1876, from the report of M. Azam, Professor of Surgery at Bordeaux. This was a case of loss of memory and of double consciousness. The patient, a female, in 1876, aged 33, had since 14 years of age been subject to attacks lasting for two periods each of three years, and also for several shorter periods. In what is called her normal state the patient knows nothing of what passes during these attacks; in her secondary state she remembers what happens in both states. If these facts are accurately recorded, how does Dr. McCann think that this affects his theory of one and invariable consciousness? Another case is given in the *Revue Scientifique* for July 15th, 1876, that of a female patient of Dr. Dufay. Here there was what is sometimes called somnambulism—and I am inclined myself to regard the previous case also as somnambulistic—but attended with abnormal consciousness, so that in the normal state the patient knew nothing of what happened in the somnambulistic state, but in this latter condition she had the double memory of both states. Many cases similar to these might be quoted and are given in the various volumes of *Mind* where the notes of these cases are also translated. Dr. McCann, in the illustration of the lifting the arm, spoke as though visible physical action were the only, or at any rate the best illustration of the result of volition. Indeed he did not seem to separate the volition from the resultant act, although in truth there might have been the intense desire to raise the arm and no physical ability to carry out the volition by action, and it is excessively curious that the very point which I have marked for notice as unsatisfactory on his side he has also drawn attention to in his speech stating that I have not distinguished between desire and volition. (Laughter.) On the contrary I took express pains, but probably I did not succeed, to sketch the various phases of mind antecedent to volition. I hope I did nothing—I certainly did not intend to do anything—that should make the ineffective desire the equivalent of an effective volition. I think that Dr. McCann hardly did justice to me there. Visible action is, however, only one phase of result from will. The influence of volition is often traceable in our thinking. Here volition follows associations as its deter-

minants all being governed by general consciousness. All ordered thought is resultant on volition. Does Dr. McCann mean by free-will "uncaused volition"? If not, what does he mean? I contend that our volitions are, in each case, determined by our antecedent consciousness and the surroundings immediately preceding volition. Ability resultant from what is this power of self-determination of which he spoke? From nothing? If not, then, everything which tends to the exercise of the ability in the mind of Dr. McCann, must be laid before us to enable us to appreciate what his definition means. He tells you I did not distinguish between volition and will. The words to me mean the same. I do not know some big lump "will;" I do not know some ability, marked "will," each activity of which is a volition. I only know in each case the effective volition consequent on antecedent states, generally preceded by intense desire, and I know nothing of these volitions except as phases of the mental states of the willer—neither of these volitions has otherwise the smallest relation to the other. (Applause.) If Dr. McCann contends that volitions are uncaused, will he please say in what the motiveless volition of an indifferent is more or less moral than the determined volition which I maintain? We have got it now that the actions urged by us are immoral, because necessitated. The actions urged on the other side are the actions of persons with "freedom of volition," whatever that may mean—no, not quite—"limited in extent," and the extent of the limitation it is impossible to determine; and if it is impossible to determine the extent of this limitation, where does the freedom begin and the necessity end? (Hear, hear, and applause.) If Dr. McCann holds that volitions are not determined, will he explain how volitions originate? If he holds, as his words seem to convey, that in some cases volitions are either wholly or partly determined, will he give illustrations of these as distinguished from the volitions he describes as free? For example, will he take some illustrations of human beings with whom he is conversant and give me in two cases one in which there is a limited and controlled volition according to him, and one with a volition which is free? and if he says, "by free I mean a self-determined volition," I shall want him to tell me what he means by "self." Dr. Dr. McCann has not told us what he means in each indi-

vidual case by "I" or "me." In his speeches he has often spoken as though with him the "I" or the "me" was thinkable distinct from, or even hostile to, consciousness or volition. "I" is the bodily, living, thinking organism. Every thought process is included in the "I." No so-called mental phase from sensation to volition is separable from it. Each so-called mental phase is the consequence of the so-called physical activity of the "I." If Dr. McCann has any other definition I shall be glad to hear it, and if he asks me why do you say "so-called," I reply that it is one of the misfortunes of every language in the world as well as one of its advantages, that every language in the world is a growing language, and consists not only of the sound coins which men use, but also of the counterfeits, fruits of the ignorance of the past, which are only slowly giving way to the education of the present. I should like Dr. McCann to tell us what he means when he uses the word "sin." It will not do for him to say that it is a piece of luggage he need not have brought with him, and that he can take a ticket for it or not as he pleases. It is part of his baggage and equipment in this debate—(laughter)—and he must deal with it or get rid of it. I come back to the point from which I started. Dr. McCann declares that Secularism is immoral, that is against morality, and he is bound to tell what he means by morality. (Applause.) In my first speech I gave utility as the test of morality. Dr. McCann answers to that, that while all moral actions are useful, all useful ones are not moral. I will ask him to give an illustration of any useful act which is not a moral one. I have given him in my speech utility as the test of morality, and I want in return some test from him. (Hear, hear.) Dr. McCann, for example, says that drinking a glass of champagne or a glass of beer is not moral. Why not? He says it is only pleasurable. Why, being only pleasurable, is it not moral? What do you include under pleasure? You must not take a wide illustration of that kind. There may be well cases in which drinking a glass of champagne or beer is immoral. You must make it specific, so that I may know what I am dealing with. Then what do you mean by pleasurable? That which is pleasurable to all? If so, why is it not moral? If you say you don't mean that, why don't you? (Laughter.) Where is the meaning which you will give

instead? Oh, but you say a selfish act is immoral. Why necessarily so? Why might not a selfish thing be also a moral thing? There are many acts which may be described as selfish which, if you specify them, I may be able to tell you whether I regard them as immoral or not. A selfish act is not necessarily an immoral act. The highest morality is to do good to others, knowing that that will produce good to you; and to do it because you know it will produce good to you means that you know that by increasing the general amount of happiness you increase your own share therein. (Loud applause.) I say that which increases the general amount of happiness is moral—that is my measure and test of morality. That a good motive makes a good act is not true. Go back a century or two, and see men with good motives murdering their fellows for the glory of their god, racking and burning the people who differed from them in opinion in order to prevent the spread of hostile opinion. Their motive to them was good, but their act was very immoral. (Loud and continued applause.)

Dr. McCann: Mr. Bradlaugh asks me to define morality, and I do so in one word—rightness. I regard the rightness of an action as distinct from the utility of an action. Now, with regard to the veracity of consciousness, what I said was that Mr. Bradlaugh's views differed from those of the best psychologists. He affirmed that consciousness was not always reliable, and he has quoted only three psychologists in support of his proposition. I have several here on my side, and one of them is one of those that he has already quoted. I hold in my hand Lewes' "Biographical History of Philosophy," Library Edition, p. 379, and here are Lewes' words on the subject: "If Descartes is wrong, if consciousness is not the ultimate ground of certitude, embracing both objective and subjective, if ideas are not the internal copies of external things, then must philosophy be content to relinquish all claim to certitude, and find refuge again in faith." That is the opinion of Lewes with regard to the certainty of consciousness. Again, he says elsewhere, p. 599: "Consciousness, then, which had for so long formed the basis of all philosophy, was thrown over by Schelling, as incompetent to solve any of its problems. Consciousness was no ground of certitude. Reason was the organ of philosophy, and reason was impersonal. The

identity of being and knowing took the place of consciousness, and became the basis of all speculation. We shall see what it led to in Hegel." He tells us that consciousness was the basis of all philosophy. Lewes' words are as clear, as explicit and as strong as words which can be used by any human writer. I have also here a number of other writers, all on my side, extending from Descartes downwards, because before his time consciousness in philosophy was not a prominent subject. Therefore I say that Mr. Bradlaugh has not proved that the best psychologists are on his side. I define will as being the power of self-determination. I exercise will; I have will; I have self-determination; I have self-control; I have the power of voluntary selection and choice. As no two men, however, are alike in all points, he says that consequently the volitions of men are different. But surely he confounds here things which differ? The power that men exercise in volition, the power to control their own actions, the power they possess over themselves, varies in different individuals, and that varies from day to day. The power is one thing, but the strength of the power is another thing, and no two men have the same degree of power. (Applause.) A large number of my auditors are Secularists, but have you no power to do anything for Secularism because you cannot do so much or speak so well as our friend, Mr. Bradlaugh, does? I never spoke of will being an entity at all; I exercise will; I can determine; I can choose; but it does not follow from what I have said that will is an entity. If I choose I am conscious that it is I who choose—I am conscious of exerting my own power. The statements made by Mr. Bradlaugh with regard to the tendrils of the plant are no doubt perfectly true, but does the plant think that the hole won't suit it, therefore it will try another hole? What does the plant know about it? The plant is wholly unconscious and is absolutely controlled, and once more I say Mr. Bradlaugh's illustration is altogether in my favor. (Laughter.) Mr. Bradlaugh's illustrations would show that we have no power whatever of selection or choice or of control, which is exactly what I assert of his teaching. He also asks me to distinguish between the state and the consciousness. I say the state is not the consciousness. The state is one thing, and the consciousness of the state is another. Mr. Brad-

laugh told you that a blow on the head will render a man insensible for a time. Then, does the man exist in no state when, as is affirmed, he is not conscious of the state. If state and consciousness be one and the same thing, if a man be not conscious he is in no state at all; and, if not, in what state is he? (Laughter.) And if consciousness sometimes tells lies, is sometimes inaccurate, how are you to know when it is accurate and when true—what is to guide us in judging when consciousness is telling "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth"? Then Mr. Bradlaugh refers to double consciousness as an illustration that consciousness is not one and invariable. But what has this to do with the question at all? A person is conscious of one condition of mind to-day and another yesterday. Does it follow that consciousness is false? No, it does not. Then Mr. Bradlaugh still confuses desire and will. Desire is merely the wish to have something which we have not already. Will is a determination to do an action. Will is the power of self-determination. The volition is the will determining. Mr. Bradlaugh asks me here whether the volition is caused. Of course, the volition is caused. Every change is caused. My friends on the other side are they who do not believe in causation; they believe only in antecedents and consequents. My volitions are caused, but not caused by my ancestors, but by myself. It is I who shape my own courses. It is I who choose and not they. I, and not some of my antecedents, am the cause of my own actions. If I am not, then something else must be, and my actions are not my own actions at all. If the actions of my life are mine they can only be mine as I have caused them. If we are partly necessitated and partly free, Mr. Bradlaugh asks me where freedom begins. Freedom begins where necessity ends; if a man's actions are altogether determined there is no freedom. I cannot give my friend the illustration he asks for of a person altogether constrained or of a person altogether free. Every person is partly free and partly not free, and his freedom ends just where necessity commences. (Cries of "Where's that?") I could tell perfectly in my own case where my antecedents were bringing their force to bear upon me. My consciousness tells me exactly when I am resisting temptation and when I am not. Is there anyone here who cannot tell when he is yielding to temptation

and when he is struggling with temptation? Mr. Bradlaugh tells us that language is a growing thing—that every language is a growing language. Very well, then let it grow according to your ideas. That is what I ask you to do. (Laughter.) "Freedom," "liberty," "choice," are according to you only immature words. I say banish them altogether, and use only the full-developed words, "prudence," "pleasure" and "necessity," and we shall see exactly what you are at. I never said that the drinking of a glass of champagne in itself was either moral or immoral. But, according to Mrs. Besant's teaching, it must necessarily be moral if it give pleasure. The drinking of the champagne is justified on the principle of its being pleasanter than drinking a glass of beer, and accordingly more moral. "There are circumstances where it becomes immoral," we are told. Are there? How can it be immoral if you cannot help it? If your antecedents compel you to drink, you have no more responsibility in drinking than in abstaining from drinking.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I have to object that, while Dr. McCann has used the word "I" at least a dozen times in his last speech, he has taken no objection to my definition of it, and has given none of his own. If he meant by the word "I" what I stated that I meant when using that word, then every phrase he has used is simply without sense—I am not saying it unfairly—and if he meant something else by the word, and wants me to reply to him, he must tell me what he means. We are now told morality is "rightness," but this is mere verbal substitution, which adds nothing. What is the standard of rightness? How am I to know what is right? Where is the test by which I can determine the rightness of any action? You have given me no standard, you have given me no test. Different peoples of the world disagree to-day as to what is right and not right. For example: You hold it to be right to eat beefsteak, but the Hindu thinks it wrong. I must have some test to determine rightness in such a case, or the debate is mere waste of time. The test of utility is objected to—no other test is given. You in this country hold it wrong to have more than one wife; others in other lands hold it right to have as many wives as they can keep. I am not meaning individuals of irregular life, I am meaning nations—peoples

who have professed to be religious, and people who are held up to us by you as models as to religion and morality even to this very moment. I did not understand Dr. McCann last week to say that my definition of consciousness differed from the best psychologists. I understood him to say that there were no psychologists who agreed with me. This, however, is of little importance. But I have to object that it is not fair to quote from Lewes where he is explaining the philosophy of each individual thinker that he is dealing with, as against his own view put separately and distinctly in a later work. Dr. McCann says by power of self-determination he means power of the person. He says, "I have self-determination, I have self-control"; but then he has not defined "I," and my definition included every thought process, included what he calls determination, included what he calls desire, included what I call perception, reflection, judgment, volition. He uses "I" as possibly meaning to him something clear and distinct, but though he has heard me say what I mean by it—and my meaning is fatal to his argument—he does not give me any means of judging what he means by it, and in what sense he uses it. Then we have a proposition which startles me, that consciousness in its nature is always the same, that volition in its own inherent nature is always the same, differing only in degree. I thought from what Dr. McCann said that he regarded consciousness as an entity. If it is an entity, describe it to me. If it is not an entity, why do you speak of its nature? Then, again, I should like to know why you speak of consciousness and volition as distinct from you, and say that, while your knowledge varies from day to day, your consciousness in its own nature is always the same. What is its own, if it has no own? You talk of the power of all men being the same, and different only in degree. There is no thing or entity called power. You may talk of ability of perception, of ability to distinguish between perceptions, of ability to reflect upon them, of ability to form new conceptions, of ability to will or to do—these are all abilities of some person; but to talk of power as though one understood some thing, some entity distinct from the person, and then to say it differs in degree, is simply to use words without having any relevancy in them. Then about the plant. I am asked, What does the plant know? I

don't know. But I do know that it does draw away the tendril when the hole is not suited to it, and puts it somewhere else. You say it can't help it. I don't say it can. (Laughter.) We will take another case. There is a well-known class of plants which exist by capturing and killing animals, and by digesting those animals. Such a plant, if you drop upon it a very small piece of flesh, will close upon that piece of flesh just as it will upon a fly, and ultimately digests the flesh just as it will digest the fly, but if you put a little piece of brickdust instead, it won't do, or attempt to do, anything of the kind. (Laughter and loud applause.) To use your own illustration, What does the plant know about it? Why doesn't it think brick-dust as good as meat? (Laughter.) As a matter of fact, neither is my question fair, nor is the question addressed by my opponent fair. I don't pretend that the plant thinks or that it knows in the same way as we know. But when you tell me that it has not the capacity of drawing its tendril back and putting it out in some other place, experience contradicts that, and you have no right to ask me what the plant knows. On your theory of free volition for man you have to deal with the illustrations right through the range of vital phænomena. Then we are told—and here is a mistake if Dr. McCann will permit me to say so—"To me my state is one thing and consciousness of the state another." Dr. McCann commits an error in supposing that words which are clear to him are necessarily clear to everybody else. Saying it in that way is simply using a form of words which mean nothing whatever. Consciousness and the state of which you are conscious can be distinguished, can they? Let us see the illustration which Dr. McCann gives to serve him. He says when a man is not conscious in what state is he? If he is in a no conscious state is he in any state at all? Does Dr. McCann mean, to me, to other people, or to himself? Other people, finding in the man none of the phænomena associated with consciousness, would describe him as in an unconscious state. If you ask him while unconscious he could not describe it at all, and it would be to him no state at all to him. (Laughter and applause.) I have not Dr. McCann's great ability of jesting on a matter of this kind, and if he will permit me to say it, we want, in dealing with this question of consciousness some-

thing more even than good humor. Dr. McCann asks me how we are to distinguish when consciousness is inaccurate and when it is accurate. I reply, by verifying, so far as is possible to us, each new phase of consciousness. Phases of consciousness with which we are familiar sufficiently verify themselves in their repetition. Our verification is not always complete, it is possibly never infallible, but that is the only possible way in which you can test the veracity of consciousness. There are many facts of consciousness which some individuals are incapable of verifying without assistance from others. Take for instance the case of color-blindness. We have it now shown from investigations in France and other countries, that a very large percentage—a considerable minority—of human beings are affected with color blindness in regard to some colors or others. There the difficulty of verification is sometimes insuperable to the individual unless he is brought in contact with better trained and more accurate abilities than his own, and unless he has himself the ability to appreciate the differences which those others see for him. Then we are asked what double consciousness has to do with the matter. Only this, that it shows that consciousness cannot be one and invariable. If you have one individual who while being able to think, speak, and have apparently all his consciousness about him, is in some states unable to remember a good half of his life, his consciousness is certainly not infallible. Then Dr. McCann says that volition is caused, and I agree with him. But is not that the end of this debate? No! he says; because my volition has been caused by myself. But you have not explained what you mean by myself. Define "I" or "self"—then I shall know what you mean? You tell me that freedom begins where necessity ends. Show me the point of this beginning of freedom. That is what I want! (Loud applause.)

The Rev. Dr. McCann: There are as many points in this room as there are persons. If you will bring me any particular person and allow me to examine him we shall all see it for ourselves. (Oh, oh, and interruption.)

Mr. Bradlaugh rising: Any person interrupting Dr. McCann will have to be expelled from this room. (Applause.)

Dr. McCann continuing: I don't think that Mr. Brad-

laugh can complain very much of you, because I think you have behaved very fairly towards us. But to continue my argument; to suppose that the line between compulsion and freedom is the same in all beings is to suppose what my friend must know is not in accordance with fact. He finds fault with me for speaking about consciousness being an entity, but I do not remember yet having said that it was an entity. Did Mr. Bradlaugh never hear of an action having a nature. An action is not an entity, but we talk of the natures of actions. Why may I not talk of the nature of consciousness? Then Mr. Bradlaugh asks for a definition of "I" or "me." There are certain words which do not require a definition and these it seems to me are two of them. But by "I," I mean my personality — my individual self who is speaking, acting, thinking. The present question, however, is the veracity of consciousness. Secularism being Necessitarianism contradicts consciousness, and therefore is fallacious in philosophy and not true. About that quotation from Lewes I will say that it was a perfectly fair one. The passage I read was one where Lewes is giving his own views. Now, I resume my argument where I left off when discussing the selfishness of Secularism, and showing that as Secularism was selfish it was, therefore, immoral. In complete accordance with this conception is the teaching of Mrs. Besant, who writes: "On what were these laws based except on utility? Murder and theft were forbidden. Why? Because the half savages' intuitions were against them? Not at all; but because men could not live together in security if these things were allowed" ("True Basis of Morality," p. 12). The only reason, therefore, for abstaining from murder, theft, and lying is a prudential one! And this is Secularist morality! Mr. Bradlaugh, however, also says ("Hutching's Debate,") "I honor my wife, I love my wife, and would do all I can to increase her happiness." Now, that sounds very nice and loving, and would have been most satisfactory had he ended there. But, unfortunately for himself, he does not end there. The next words are "because in making her happiness I am adding to my own. I admit it is selfish." Well, so I think. So Mr. Bradlaugh tells us that disinterested love is not possible to a Secularist, that his love for his wife is not love for his wife, but only

for himself. And if this be true with regard to one's wife, how much more true must it be with regard to one's neighbor? He then proceeds to say: "I would be good and do good to men, that being good to men, they may be good to me and those around me, reflecting the good which I give back on myself." All, you will see, is in the same direction. The good is given forth, not for the good of the recipient nor for the love of the good because it is good, but that it may be reflected back on the giver. How generously benevolent all this is! Mr. Bradlaugh advocates the cause of Secularism, not for the good of his fellow men, but for the good of himself. I should not venture to say so, but as Mr. Bradlaugh says it of himself Mr. Bradlaugh knows best. Will he forgive me for saying that I don't believe him. His theory compels him to make himself appear worse than he is, for I am perfectly convinced that he would do good to another without any consideration or hope of a reflected reward. If he saw a hungry child looking into the window of a baker's shop, I know full well he would give it a bun. Why? Because it would reflect pleasure on himself? No! It would do that, but that would not be his motive. His motive, I am convinced, would be kindness to the child. (Applause.) But many men are better than their creed, and Mr. Bradlaugh is one, for he is human, and utility is so low as to be, I think, not only immoral, but inhuman. Professor Bain arranges the matter very systematically, and let me say I would not quote Bain or any other man if he were not in complete accordance with my friend on the left. He says ("Mental and Moral Philosophy," page 392):— "Human pursuit, as a whole, is divided, for important practical reasons, into two great departments. The first embraces the highest and most comprehensive regard to self, and it is designated Prudence, self-love, the search after happiness. The second department of pursuit comprises the regard to others, and is named Duty. It is warred against, not only by the forces inimical to prudence, but also occasionally by prudence itself." This is so plain that it is impossible to mistake its meaning. Prudence first, duty afterwards; and, should a war arise between the two, duty must give way. Once more I return to the words we use, and say, if morality be only utility, "self-love," and "prudence," banish all such words as "benevolence," "philanthropy,"

"generosity," "sympathy," and use only such words as you have a right to use, as "usefulness," "prudence," and "selfishness," and see what your Secularism will come to. This may be utility, but it is not morality. Utility is morality, say our friends; but, as Mr. C. Watts most pertinently says, "An important question here suggests itself. What is utility? and how is it to be judged of and tested? What may appear, it is urged, useful to one man, another may regard as altogether useless; who, therefore, is to decide the utility of an act? The answer to this will be found in the greatest happiness principle" (*Secular Review*, January 10th, 1880). This is no answer at all, for the question still remains, what tends to the greatest happiness? Mr. Bradlaugh practically confesses there is no one to answer the question—there is no standard of morality. He said to Mr. Hutchings: "The reason why I cannot give you a definite system to-day, expressly limiting not only for to-day, but also for the future, the standard of right and wrong, that the knowledge of to-day may teach us a still better system than the knowledge of yesterday, and the knowledge of to-morrow may teach us a still better system than the knowledge of to-day" ("Hutchings Discussion," page 42). Rather an awkward position to be in, not to have a system at any time because a better one may follow after! What utter waste of time to talk about the morality of utility, when there is no one to tell us what utility is, even for to-day; to boast of the greatest happiness for the greatest number, when its advocates do not know what it is, except as a definition. We are all familiar with the great activity of Mr. Bradlaugh, but how unfortunate for him not to know whether his activity is useful or useless, is for happiness or misery, is moral or immoral. The position, therefore, is this: either there is or there is not a test of Secular morality. If there be not, then no one has any right to find fault with any one, no matter what he does. If there be a test, it must either be individual or social. Some Secularists, such as Mr. Lewin, seem to consider it altogether a personal matter. He says: "Nor do I approve of investigation permitted into a man's motives for joining the society, or even an investigation of his personal character before admitting him. A man's morals, like his opinions, are his own affair, and presidents and

secretaries are not competent to sit in judgment on such matters." The very fact, however, that Mr. Lewin has to utter such a complaint shows that it is not generally the teaching of Secularism that a man's morals are his own affair. It would be more than strange if it were. We are consequently shut up to the conclusion that society must decide what is pleasantest for itself—what is to be its morality. Professor Bain puts this with remarkable clearness. He says for the peculiar attribute of rightness: "We must refer to the institution of government or authority." Again: "A moral act is merely an act tending to reconcile the good of the agent with the good of the whole society; it is an act prescribed by social authority, and rendered obligatory on every citizen. Its morality is constituted by its authoritative prescription, and not by its fulfilling the primary ends of the social institution. A bad law is still a law; an ill judged moral precept is still a moral precept, felt as such by every loyal citizen." In other words it is more useful to obey the social authority even when the authority is bad than to disobey it. Whatever social authority decrees to be moral, is thus made moral be its character what it may. It seems a strange position but it is the only logical one open to Secularism. In perfect agreement with this Mr. J. Symes says in the *National Reformer*, of May 18th, 1879: "Society contains everywhere and always all the real and necessary elements and sanctions of morality." . . . . "Public opinion is the standard of morality." "Here then is the standard of morality practically omnipotent in its operation." He further proceeds to argue that public opinion has the right to enforce its dictates even to the point of persecution. He says, "Therefore we must say again that for the individual, whatever public opinion sanctions is right." "But while public opinion justifies the persecution the heretic is justified on the principle of self preservation in resisting that public sentiment, and those laws which no longer protect him, but are bent on his destruction. A simpler case still is the following: A seaman is cast away among cannibals, whose public opinion impels them to eat him if they can; while his principle of self-preservation inspires him to resist and do his best to escape from such a fate. Here also we see utterly irreconcilable elements thrown into violent antagonism,

though both are in a very important sense right." But surely Mr. Symes is not consistent. The cannibals, according to him, were acting morally in trying to eat the sailor, and therefore the sailor must have been an immoral man to oppose their appetite. Except in this little blunder, Messrs. Symes and Bain are perfectly consistent in the standard they give for Secular morals. Mr. Symes, however, is a prudent man, and gives the following advice to his brother Secularists: "When a man differs fundamentally from the community in which he dwells his only safe and prudent course is to be silent or emigrate." Now, that the Secularists do differ fundamentally from the community in which they dwell is beyond controversy. But lest there should be any doubt on the point, we have the authority of Mr. Bradlaugh, who says: "They (the community) have all the wealth, all the power, all the talent, all the logic, all the eloquence." We thank him for the tribute. But if public opinion be the standard of morality, and the Secularists are opposed to "all the wealth, all the power, all the talent, all the logic, all the eloquence," the very things that give value to public opinion, then it necessarily follows according to his own showing that Secularism is immoral; and therefore Mr. Bradlaugh, according to his own showing, ought either to be silent or emigrate; but I am quite sure he will neither be the one or do the other. (Laughter.) Once more I ask the Secularists to be consistent and banish from their vocabulary all such words as morality and immorality, virtue and vice, praise and blame, censure and approval, and in doing so they will banish some of the noblest words we use, and do more to expose the true character of Secularism than months of debate. Expose its character not only to those who are not Secularists, but, what is of far more importance, give its true character to Secularists themselves. If I am not now warranted in asserting that Secularism is immoral, I should much like to know what could possibly give me such right; and if I am warranted I have proved the proposition that Secularism is immoral.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Linking together some words from an article of Mr. Symes's with some words of my own utterly unconnected with it cannot make an argument. We have had no test of "rightness" given in the last speech, and it is utterly impossible to discuss whether Secularism is moral

unless Dr. McCann tells us what he means by "right." I understand him to say he will pass it over till by-and-bye. Then it was not worth while opening the question at all. Unless we each know what is the test which the other claims to apply, the discussion is utterly without meaning. Dr. McCann is good enough to tell us that there are as many points of difference with reference to freedom and necessity in each volition as there are persons in this room, but he did not venture to say where the point of limitation was in any one case. Undoubtedly not only organisations differ, but the antecedents to each volition differ with each individual and each separate volition is the resultant of those organisations and antecedents. He frankly confesses that he cannot generally give the line—the point where liberty commences, necessity ceases. He implied that he could do it in his own case, but he did not. Then he turns upon me and says actions have natures as well as entities—consciousness is an action of mind. What? one and invariable action of mind right through his existence? That definition is an absurdity on the face of it. Activity without change, actions all the same from the very first moment of the child coming from the womb till vitality ceases? What, then, becomes of your one and invariable consciousness only changing in the states? If consciousness be action only what do you mean by states of the action? And then you say "I" means the individual thinking, speaking, acting person. I agree in that. Then is not this consciousness part of the thinking? If it is a part of the thinking it is a part of the person. It changes with each new thought. Consciousness is made up of the totality and sum of thought. It is made up of perception, the memory of perception, the judgment on perceptions. These and various other thought-processes are all different phases of it, and there is constant change; it cannot be one invariable action. (Applause.) You have to distinguish the nature of each of these mental phases to properly define consciousness. Then Dr. McCann says our only reason for abstaining from murder, theft, and lying is a prudential one. You say murder is wrong. Why? We have said it is wrong because it tends to mischief and not to improvement, to misery and not to happiness—because it diminishes the general sum of the well-being of the human race. Give your

reasons, other than these, why murder is wrong. Why should a prudential act be necessarily an immoral one? Dr. McCann says it is "prudence first and duty afterwards." Where did you learn that we thus distinguish between prudence and duty, and where do we put prudence first and duty second? With us prudence is duty, if you know it tends to human well being. Dr. McCann says disinterested love is not possible to a Secularist. Will he give me an instance of any human being of any grade to whom disinterested love is possible? Then Dr. McCann is good enough to disbelieve me with regard to my advocacy of Secularism. He says that I do not advocate Secularism for myself; he says that I advocate Secularism for the benefit of others. But to me the good of others is the good of myself. I cannot separate my good from the good of others. I am a sharer in the general heritage of humanity. As that diminishes I suffer, as it increases I enjoy it. (Applause.) Dr. McCann is quite sure that I would give a hungry child a bun. Not always sure; because if I had reason to suppose that persons were trading upon its misery, I should not give the child the bun, to be carried by it to some lazy idler, and thus encourage the perpetuation of robbery and meanness. Then we are told that prudence first, duty afterwards is not rightness. But what is rightness? You have omitted to tell us. (Hear, hear.) You have changed the word morality to the word rightness. But you have given us no standard or test—you have given us no code where we can find it, and you reproach us with not having a code. You tell us that no one can even to-day say what is useful. To tell us that is not true. It simply is not the fact. We do not say no one can tell us what is useful to-day. But that what people do tell us is useful to-day may be corrected by better knowledge which they or other people may have to-morrow. We can only shape our conduct to-day by the experience of to-day, including in this the stored experience of the long yesterday. Dr. McCann is good enough to quote from a large number of people. He would have me answer for Mr. Walter Lewin, who is hostile to Secularism, and would have me bound by each word of Mr. Symes, while he would not accept the official declaration of the principles of the National Secular Society, carefully drawn up and formally endorsed by the general body. He has never tried to answer what I put

forward as the official declarations of Secularism. Instead of answering my first speech in this debate he builds straw men to demolish. These are the puppets he pulls to amuse you; there is not the slightest attempt to even examine the Secularism I put to you. He has not even troubled to show you that it was not a true representation of Secularism. He has not dealt with it at all. He only complains that we have no code, but does not examine what we have. He introduces funny illustrations, which, if relevant, might make myself, or someone else ridiculous, but may be equally turned against himself. How, according to you, are the cannibals to act who are hungry, with a tender missionary amongst them? (Much laughter.) How, according to you, are they to determine whether it be rightness or not to eat that missionary; and, according to you, what should determine the rightness of the missionary in resisting or otherwise? May he not have been provided as a special breakfast or dinner for these poor hungry cannibals by some ruler who created them and himself, who has sole charge of the morality of the world? (Laughter.) We have got now nearly to the close of two-thirds of this debate, and at any rate there is one satisfaction so far, that my antagonist has treated me with the most perfect courtesy, and has treated you even generously so far as your expressions of dissent are concerned. He speaks here with a large majority hostile to the views he holds; here apparently it is the smaller minority who sympathise with those views. Let me ask you, therefore, that on the closing night, when feelings are likely to get warmer, that you will aid us in preserving the same decorum; that whatever we may disagree about in our discussion of rightness and wrongness, we shall, at any rate, preserve fair respect to each other's reasonings in the enunciation of opinion, feeling certain that patience on each side must tend more to the elucidation of the truth than mere flinging personal words, which serve no purpose but to make bitterness now and to perpetuate that bitterness. (Loud applause.)

A vote of thanks to Mrs. Besant for presiding, proposed by Dr. McCann, seconded by Mr. Bradlaugh, and carried unanimously, closed the proceedings.

THIRD NIGHT.—W. BARNARD, Esq., in the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN said: We have arrived at the last night of this most interesting debate, and hitherto we have got on very comfortably. You must remember this—those of you who are here to-night for the first time—that debaters do not require to be thwarted in any way, but they require all the assistance you can give them. Debating is a very difficult task, and you know very well that both these gentlemen intend to do their very best—(A voice: "One of them does," and interruption)—and I am quite sure you want to do your best as an audience, so that you will listen to them patiently and attentively, and not interrupt either of the speakers. The first speaker to-night will be Dr. McCann, who will reopen the debate in a speech of half-an-hour; then Mr. Bradlaugh will follow in a speech of half-an-hour; and then each speaker will follow alternately with speeches of a quarter of an hour, and we shall thus get to the close of the two hours, Mr. Bradlaugh taking the last speech.

The Rev. Dr. MCCANN, who was received with hearty applause, then said: As this is the last evening of our debate, my best plan will be to finish what I have to say on the affirmative side, and then occupy the remainder of my time in replying to Mr. Bradlaugh. In continuation of my argument that Secularism is immoral, I have yet one other point to bring forward, and that is that a moral act must be one done voluntarily. We must have the power to do some other act at the time we did the one called moral. In other words, it must be an act of choice; by no fair use of language can that be called a moral act that is thrust upon me, or that I am compelled to perform. The man in the uncomfortable position indicated by my friend, under the two ton stone, could hardly be said to be either moral or immoral for lying there, seeing that he had no power of getting up, although lying there might cause his death. But if the stone were removed, and all physical restraint taken away, and he chose to lie on still, after he had the power to rise, and lying there resulted in his death, then you would say he had acted immorally, and truly so; but you will observe the morality and choice go hand-in-hand. It must be perfectly clear to all that there can be

neither morality nor immorality where there is no liberty of selection. But neither can there be virtue nor vice, praise nor blame. It is impossible to call that virtuous or vicious which could not be avoided, unless indeed a meaning be attached to virtue and vice different from that attached to it by the generality of mankind. No matter what else these words may include they always include freedom of choice. Secularists may use these words in deference to the weakness of mankind, who they imagine still to be in the infancy of thought, and therefore also in the infancy of language, but what meaning do they attach to them? If man "cannot resist the circumstances resulting in volition," or, as Mr. Bradlaugh put it last evening, if "the volition is the resultant of those organisations and antecedents"? I cannot press this point too strongly, that according to my friend's teaching the volition of the man is as the volition of the plant, the resultant of organisation and antecedents. If Secularists speak of virtue or vice in men, why then do they not extend the term to plants, or even to stones, as their actions are also resultant of their structures and their antecedents? Why not speak of a virtuous or vicious diamond, a virtuous or a vicious rose? Secularists have no more right to apply these terms to human beings than they have to all other beings. I hold that if they call men virtuous or vicious and refuse to call roses the same, they are utterly inconsistent. I shall be glad if Mr. Bradlaugh will say whether he will apply these terms to plants and minerals, or if he will not, to tell us why he will not. I have nothing whatever to do with defining virtue or vice. (Much laughter.) They have some meaning, I presume, even to Mr. Bradlaugh. Whatever that meaning be it must be applicable to all similar modes of action whether of plant or man, and must be applicable to plant and man if both act under like conditions as Secularists affirm they do. If these words belong to the infancy of language, and at Mr. Bradlaugh's advanced stage convey no meaning to him, will he kindly say so and save all further discussion of them? I fancy that system will not commend itself to the general judgment of mankind that either says virtue and vice have no meaning, or if they have, it is one that is applicable equally to all modes of minerals, plants, and man. I hope my friend's bye-

play on side issues—(hear, hear)—and his demands for definitions where they are not required, but only hinder the discussion of important points, will not banish "virtue" from his reply. There are, however, other words in frequent use amongst us, and which are also generally supposed to have some definite meaning, such as praise and blame, approval and censure. But whence come they? You cannot praise anyone for doing what he cannot help doing. To force anyone to do a kindness and then praise him for doing it would be mockery of the cruellest kind. As little can we blame anyone if necessitated to any action. If my antecedents and my organism compel me to kill—if they result in the volition that is followed by murder—it is utterly inconsistent to blame me for the act. I think even Mr. Bradlaugh will feel himself compelled to acknowledge this. Would he praise a rose if it were a fine specimen, or blame it if it were a poor one? If not, why not, while he accords praise or blame to the actions of mankind? Will he tell us how, if our actions are determined by our organisation and our antecedents, they can be the object of approval or disapproval of any kind whatever? or whether he will here discard the language usually employed by other men and never speak of either praise or blame? Mr. Austin Holyoake was consistent in the matter when he said that as he could not help the impulses of his nature he did not consider any thanks were due to him. It was rather a rebuke to his brother Secularists for so far forgetting their principles as to award him thanks. Mr. H. G. Atkinson is also consistent when he says: "I am a creature of Necessity. I claim neither merit nor demerit. I feel that I am completely the result of my nature, and compelled to do what I do as the needle to point to the north, or the puppet to move according as the string is pulled. I cannot alter my will or be other than I am, and cannot deserve either reward or punishment." Will Mr. Bradlaugh be equally consistent, and at once acknowledge in so many words what he has already maintained in fact—that we are only puppets moved by the strings of organisation and antecedents, and so deserving neither of praise nor blame? Will he be consistent, and not again take part in what must be to him the farce of proposing or seconding a vote of thanks to our chairman? Will he be consistent? He cannot help being inconsistent

if the string pulls him that way; so that when he proposes a vote of thanks to the chairman this evening, as I presume he will, you will know it is no voluntary action on his part—it is only the string that has pulled him in that direction. (Laughter and applause.) In point of fact it is perfectly impossible to talk consistently in the language of Secularism. (Loud applause and laughter.) Hence Secularism is in reality a bundle of contradictions. (Renewed laughter.) It tells us "that it is the duty of every individual to actively attack all barriers to equal freedom of thought and utterance upon all political, theological, and social subjects." (Hear, hear, and applause.) I think so, but I am puzzled to know how Mr. Bradlaugh can urge this when he has shown so clearly, and by such luxuriance of illustration, that he does not believe in the power of anyone to will action of any kind whatever. (Laughter.) It is, doubtless, possible for Secularists to pass on force, but not to originate it, for we must ever remember that when Mr. Bradlaugh speaks of force, energy, or activity, he is speaking of that which is physical, the same as that which moves stones and stars. Secularists are urged to certain lines of action. They are blamed for their indifference, and, as Mrs. Besant has put it, for their "disgracefully and lamentably small contributions" (*National Reformer*, June 6th, 1879). (Laughter and applause.) But surely this is scarcely fair. Why urge men to do the impossible? As well urge the plant to go through the stone, or digest the brick-dust. If the physical conditions be present—if the right strings are attached to the puppets—they will be pulled the right way without any urging; but if the other strings are attached, all the urging in the world will not be of any avail. Language will require to grow for a long time, at its present rate of growth, before Secularists shall be able to speak so as to be in harmony with their own theories. I want no better illustration of the contradictory character of Secularism than any one of Mr. Bradlaugh's speeches. I now arrive at my next proposition, which is that Secularism is anti-social—in other words, that it is practically opposed to the best interests of society. (Hisses and applause.) My time will not permit me to do much more than restate the principles which I have shown to be those of Secularism, and ask what would be the condition of society if they were

universally adopted. It first affirms Atheism to be the true doctrine of life. (General cries of Hear, hear.) Very well, that is exactly what I have said. (Loud applause.) It next affirms that, all men being the results of their physical conditions and antecedents, have no self-control, consequently if they lie, or steal, or murder, they are not to blame, and cannot be blamed. (Oh, oh!) If, on the other hand, they are true, honest, and good, they deserve not praise any more than does the rose for its bloom. If they aid their brethren they deserve not reward, if they wrong and injure them they deserve not punishment. The strong arm of society may punish them, but they do not deserve it. Let this belief become prevalent in society, and what would be the natural result? Again, it asserts that utility is the highest, the only morality. (Hear, hear.) You see I am quoting accurately the principles of Secularism. (Hear, hear, laughter, and applause.) That morality consists in pleasing ourselves. That selfishness is to be our guide in life. That we are to do good in order to get good—to help others in order that they may help us. That disinterested love is impossible. What would the condition of society be if these beliefs held sway? Men are selfish enough as it is. What would they be then? Secularism, also must ignore virtue and vice as we have seen. Now, what do you suppose would be the effect on society if men could be persuaded that no action of theirs could be either virtuous or vicious? That, no matter how earnest they may be to make the world better than they found it, it is not virtue, and no matter how earnest to make it worse than they found it, it is not vice. That such words as these, and all others of the same family, only express antiquated ideas, having no corresponding reality in life. It would require a cleverer word-painter than I am—(hear, hear, laughter, and applause)—to paint the results of a universal belief in what I consider such terrible fallacies. (Renewed laughter and interruption.)

The CHAIRMAN: Do not interrupt the speaker. If you think he is putting his foot in it by all means let him to do so, and let Mr. Bradlaugh deal with him. It is not for the audience to deal with the speaker. (Hear, hear.)

The Rev. Dr. MCCANN: The following quotations will also help to place the anti-social character of Secularism in a clearer light. They are from an old debate—that with

Dr. Baylee. I would not quote them did I not think that they accurately express the belief of Mr. Bradlaugh to-day, as they did then. I do not think it fair to quote a man to-day against himself ten or twenty years ago, if he says that in the meantime he has altered or modified his views. No man, the Pope excepted, now calls himself infallible. I have changed my own views on many subjects, and should be the last, therefore, to deny to another the right I claim for myself. (Hear, hear.) It is not my wish to snatch any platform triumph, but it is my wish, and my very earnest wish, to have the subject honestly and thoroughly discussed. Dr. Baylee asks Mr. Bradlaugh: "What restraint has an Atheist from stealing a small sum from a wealthy master if his own family be in want?" Mr. Bradlaugh replied: "The cognizance that all actions which do not tend to the general happiness of the human family are immoral." The case was this, an Atheist's family was in want, he was employed by a wealthy master, he saw an opportunity of taking a small sum of money to help his starving family under circumstances that would prevent his master knowing he had taken it, and the only thing to prevent him taking food to his starving children was the knowledge of the proposition that the action was immoral, *i.e.*, useless, because it would not tend to the general happiness of the human family. (Hear, hear.) Remember that the man was an Atheist, and therefore this was the only consideration that could influence him against the taking of the money. But there were many to influence him in its favor—the consideration that if he took it he could not be blamed, nor would he deserve punishment, nor was it vice; the consideration that—as according to the great Utilitarian, Bain, prudence comes first and duty afterwards—he was acting prudently in providing for his starving family. Surely Mr. Bradlaugh, who knows men as well as most, cannot deceive himself into the belief that this would be an effective aid to honesty! Responsibility is also generally supposed to play rather an important part in the working of society. Dr. Baylee asked Mr. Bradlaugh the important question: "To whom is man responsible?" The answer was: "I do not know that he is responsible to anyone." In that case man is not a responsible being—not responsible to anyone for his actions to anyone. Of course, he cannot be if he could not help them. Next question:

"Then, if a man commit adultery is he responsible to no one?" Answer: "If by responsibility you mean does the commission of an immoral"—(that is, useless act)—"tend to misery, Yes; if more than that, No."——

Mr. BRADLAUGH (rising): I do not think the words "useless act" are in my answer.

The Rev. Dr. MCCANN: No, no! I did not say they were. But the prevention of an immoral act tending to misery is not responsibility, therefore Mr. Bradlaugh says, in fact, that an adulterer is responsible to no one. If this be not anti-social, what can be? (Applause.) But may I ask in passing, hoping for an answer, why should an immoral, that is, a useless act, necessarily tend to misery—it may tend to regret—but why to misery? The next question was, "Is he not responsible to the husband?" Reply: "One must have the whole of the circumstances to say yes or no." (Hear, hear, and loud applause.) "Suppose a husband were unkind to his wife?" Then, according to this——

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I think, if you are quoting from the Baylee Debate, it will be better to finish the quotation first, and make your comment afterwards; otherwise there may be misapprehension. (Hear, hear; and a voice: "A jumble.") Give us each answer by itself.

The Rev. Dr. MCCANN: I take each answer, and comment on each answer as I go along. According to this adultery, where the husband is unkind, is justifiable. But who is to decide where the degree of unkindness is to be drawn? Next question: "Is he responsible to a good and kind husband?" Answer: "If by responsible you mean should a good husband take measures to prevent the commission of adultery, yes; if more, what do you mean?" Comment by myself: According to this, therefore, if adultery be committed with the wife of a good and kind husband, all the husband has a right to do is to try and prevent its repetition! He has no right to censure the adulterer; no right to call the deed even vicious; he can only call it useless, and try to prevent the recurrence of the useless act; for do not forget that the immoral and the useless are exactly the same thing, in the Secular creed, at least. Another question was: "Then, in your sense of the word responsibility, is not man responsible to his fellow-men?" Reply: "My own sense

shuts out responsibility; therefore, no." Whether this be social or anti-social I leave others to infer. Yet, I fancied I had read of responsibility somewhere, so I turned to the *National Reformer*, and there I read the remarkable words, "For the opinions expressed in all signed articles the writers alone are morally responsible." (Laughter.) Morally responsible! (Renewed laughter.) Here we have not only responsibility, but moral responsibility. Apparently, if Mr. Bradlaugh's own sense shuts out responsibility, he does not intend that the senses of the writers in his paper shall shut it out. Perhaps he will explain this. (Hear, hear.) A further question was, "What does Atheism teach about marriage?" the reply being, "It teaches that if a man take a woman, he is bound to do everything that a man can for their mutual happiness." (Hear, hear.) "He should be thoughtful before marriage to see that they have a mutually suitable organisation." Comment by myself: Why is he bound to do what he can for their mutual happiness? If he wants her to help him, then, according to what we have already heard, he will help her; but if he does not want happiness from her, as Mr. Bradlaugh has implicitly stated, there is no reason why he should add to hers. Next question: "If their organisation be unsuitable, may they separate at will?" Reply: If they both be of opinion that their continued marriage union would tend to misery, it would be better for them to separate"—(hear, hear, and applause)—let me finish Mr. Bradlaugh's answer, "and that is the tendency of our present legislation." But that this may not be misunderstood, we must see what Mr. Bradlaugh means by marriage. In his debate with Mr. King, he said—

Mr. BRADLAUGH (interrupting): I beg pardon for a moment. I must object to quotations from a debate which I have repudiated, unless it is taken either from the report of the *National Reformer* or the *Bury Times*. The King Debate is one of the grossest misrepresentations that has been printed.

The CHAIRMAN: As Chairman, I think it is better that the person who is opening the discussion shall be allowed to go on in his own way, and I shall use the same argument to Dr. McCann if he interrupts Mr. Bradlaugh. I think it is better that the reply shall come in its proper place.

The Rev. Dr. McCANN: Mr. Bradlaugh may have re-

pudiated the King Debate, but does he repudiate the quotation I have given? Does it, or does it not, express his sentiments? Mr. Bradlaugh says in his debate with Mr. King, "I call every woman a wife who lives with and has children to a man." I do not blame Mr. Bradlaugh for this sentiment: it is a necessary deduction from the Secularistic theory that we are only developed brutes; for if there be no such thing as marriage amongst cattle, why should there be amongst human beings if we are only cattle of a higher order? The effect of such teaching on society, if society believed it, which fortunately society does not, would be to shake the social fabric to its foundation, and turn our country into a pandemonium. I now finish my positive work of affirming and giving my reasons for my affirmations that Secularism is Atheism, is unphilosophical, is immoral and is anti-social. I hoped to have maintained the proposition also that it is anti-secular, but if the propositions I have already advanced be true, then it necessarily follows that it must be anti-secular also, or a system opposed to our best interests for time. I now proceed to reply to some of the discursive remarks made by my opponent on last evening, which I may not have already noticed. I call them discursive, because he has not from the first attempted to follow my reasoning as a whole, but has selected words and phrases here and there, and has concentrated attention on them, as though they were the main body of my argument. Mr. Bradlaugh said that "linking together some words from an article of Mr. Symes with some words of his own could not make an argument." I never thought it could. But having concluded my argument, basing it upon its own merits, some words from Mr. Symes and some words from Mr. Bradlaugh may illustrate and confirm it. This is what I did and nothing more, and this was all Mr. Bradlaugh had to say upon the question whether society had a right to determine its own morality and to enforce its determination. My friend spent much time in asking for a definition of "I," giving one of his own which he knew I could not accept. I thought it a pity to draw off attention from the main line of thought to definitions which were not required for an adequate understanding of the subject. Surely, if my friend were very anxious to have the fundamental practical points discussed,

he would not studiously avoid them, and spend his time, and try to spend mine, on subsidiary and minute details which cannot affect the discussion much either one way or the other. (Applause.) However, I gave him a definition with which he agreed. Then I am asked: "Is not consciousness a part of the thinker—is it part of the person?" No, it is not part of the person. A thought is not an entity, but an action of the thinker. Thought and thinker are not the same, though you cannot separate the thought from the thinker except in thought. Steel is bright, but the brightness is not the steel. My friend has tried hard to get from me some acknowledgment of the untrustworthiness of consciousness, but in vain. Our senses may deceive us, as in the case of color-blindness instanced last evening, and also referred to by Huxley to show that we must rely on consciousness at last; our inferences may be illogical; our judgment warped; but our consciousness, our knowledge of our own mental states—as I have all along said, it is of that consciousness alone I am speaking—this is always trustworthy, always reliable. It is quite natural he should try to overturn this, as it cannot be pleasant for Secularists to have their system demonstrated to be unphilosophical, because they so frequently boast of their philosophical character. But perhaps it is with them as with those in France, who most loudly shouted of "liberty, equality and fraternity" when they had least of it. In reply to my question how we are to distinguish when consciousness is inaccurate and when it is accurate it is answered, "by verifying each new phase of consciousness; our verification is not always infallible, but that is the only possible way in which you can test it." But that is no test at all. You verify an unreliable consciousness by an unreliable verification. An unreliable verification is no verification; therefore, according to my friend, it is impossible to be certain when consciousness is true and when it is false. Most certainly, whatever else it may be, it is not a test of truth to Secularists. Again, I ask where are they to find such a test—a starting point in thought that cannot deceive them? If there be such starting point, where is it? If there be not, what then? (Loud continued applause.)

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bradlaugh will now have half an hour.

Mr. BRADLAUGH then rose to make his first speech, and was received with demonstrations of enthusiasm. He said: Dr. McCann, in this debate, undertook to show that Secularism was unphilosophical, immoral and anti-social. He has sought to make this out by alleging that Secularism is Atheistic, Necessitarian and Utilitarian. Out of all these words there is only one word which he has sought to define, *i.e.*, the word Necessitarian; and he persists to-night that definitions are unimportant. But if definitions are unimportant, what is the use of using language at all? We may use the words in exactly opposite senses, or we may use the words without comprehending the senses in which we use them. All the other words which have been used by him have been used without the slightest attempt at definition or explanation. I explained at length what the word Secularism meant according to a large number of Secularists and as officially declared by the National Secular Society, but Dr. McCann has, up to the present moment, not thought fit to offer a solitary word of criticism on this explanation. He has only in his last speech used one or two words out of my first speech, but even then has not attempted any answer or criticism. He dismisses the explanation as in no manner concerning him in this debate, although many weeks ago he knew from me in writing that this would be the explanation of Secularism I should defend. He apparently will not take this as Secularism, or even as a presentment of Secularism needing the smallest examination, yet he uses detached phrases of individuals, worthy or unworthy, some of them, as Mr. Walter Lewin, being only remotely connected with Secularism by having attacked it. To-night he has referred to answers—supposed to have been given by me in various debates, and with reference to those taken from my debate with Mr. David King, I regret he has used a report which misrepresents my real views, and which puts into my mouth words which I did not utter. From the very first issue of that report—at the time when it was printed and published by Mr. David King—I denounced it a falsehood, and have repeatedly made the same denunciation. I am sure that Dr. McCann would not have quoted that if he had known that such was the case, and I am rather surprised that so attentive a reader of our literature should not have been acquainted with it. I

am sure that Dr. McCann would have preferred to refer to the *Bury Times* report, in which he would have found something a little more clear and distinct. It is so easy to give a rough turn of words to a phrase and make it seem coarse where it is not, and that is just what has been done in the case of this report published by Mr. David King. Of the word Atheism, although it was declared that Secularism was Atheism, Dr. McCann offered no definition, but was content to leave it as if everyone agreed in its meaning. By "Atheism" I mean Monism, that is the affirmation of one existence, of which existence I only know mode, each mode being distinguished in thought by its qualities. This affirmation is a positive, not a negative, affirmation, and is properly describable as Atheism, because it does not include in it any possibility of Theos. It is, because without God, distinctly an Atheistic affirmation. It is perfectly true that Secularism is without God. The word "immoral," in the question, I have defined by making utility the Secularistic test. Dr. McCann has only substituted one word "rightness" for another word "moral," and does not define either of them. (Loud applause.) Unphilosophical has passed as a big word of condemnation, but not the faintest attempt has been made to explain what is meant by philosophy, or which is the particular philosophy by which Secularism is condemned. Last week, when Dr. McCann read to you from the exposition by the late George Henry Lewes of the views of Descartes on the certitude of consciousness, I suggested that it was hardly fair to put the exposition by Mr. Lewes of the views of Descartes, as against Mr. Lewes's own and later explanation of consciousness. I understood Dr. McCann to reply that what he had read were the views of Mr. Lewes personally. Here Dr. McCann must have been misled either by an imperfect copy of Lewes's brilliant work, or in the hurry of selection he must have misread. If he will turn to the "History of Philosophy," 3rd edition, vol. ii., p. 154, he will find—a few lines lower down than where he concluded his quotation on Descartes' proposition of the certitude of consciousness—these words:—"This is the basis on which Descartes' system is erected; if this basis be rotten, the superstructure must fall. If the root is vitiated the tree will bear no fruit. No thinker, except Spinoza, has so clearly, so frankly, stated

his criterion. And the criterion is fallacious." (Loud applause.) A little lower down on the same page Lewes asks: "What ground can my consciousness afford respecting things which are not me? How does the principle of certitude apply? How far does it extend?" The quotation made by Dr. McCann, from Lewes on Schelling, was still more unhappily selected, for if Dr. McCann had read on vol. ii., p. 529, he would have found these words: "Consciousness, then, which had so long formed the basis of all philosophy, was thrown over by Schelling as incompetent to solve any of its problems. Consciousness was no ground of certitude." (Applause.) As an illustration of the difficulties which occur in defining morality, unless you have a clear test or standard, I may take the expressions of several clergymen of the Church of England in reference to the recent convictions for bribery—(loud applause)—and I am sure Dr. McCann will bear with me if I have any difficulty when I come to deal with the matter of virtue and vice. The Rev. D. Bruce Payne says, writing to the *Daily News*, that "the crime for which these men are picked out from thousands of similar offenders is not moral but political." The Vicar of Deal describes one of the very worst of the bribers as "an upright Christian gentleman." (Oh, oh!) With the Secularist bribery is wrong, not because the law forbids it, but rather because it tends to the demoralisation and degradation of the country where it is practised. (Loud cheers.) The chief briber, on behalf of whom the clergymen at Deal have interested themselves, had, on his own admission, not only bribed, but had sworn falsely, to try to conceal the fact on the trial of the election petition. He had not only taken money wherewith to bribe, but had kept part of the money back for his own profit—(oh!)—and yet here are clergymen of the Church declaring that this person has committed no moral offence, but is "an upright Christian gentleman." (Oh! and laughter.) I have no doubt Dr. McCann would say that bribery, perjury and embezzlement were immoral; but I ask him where is the test and standard by which the moral quality of such perjury, embezzlement and bribery may be determined, if not by utility? To tell me this is subsidiary, to tell me that I avoid the fundamental question in so raising it, is to use language which does not accurately convey the position I

have taken in this debate. Dr. McCann says a moral act must be done voluntarily, but he has never yet answered the question I put to him early in this debate—viz.: Why is the act following a causeless volition more moral than that following a caused volition? Unless he does this it is simply wasting time to repeat phrases about immorality of necessitated volition. Where have Necessitarians ever said that man has no power of control? From beginning to end I have taken man's organisation and antecedents, not as separate from the man, but as the man. Dr. McCann separates these to find his powerless man. Then Dr. McCann speaks of praise and blame being inconsistent with Necessitarianism. What relations have praise and blame to free volition? I can understand that a man who believes that volition is caused may use words which he thinks will change the future volition. But I cannot understand a man talking of praise or blame in reference to free volition, to which praise or blame must be as inapplicable as it is possible for anything to be. Praise and blame—that is, words of appreciation or depreciation of any acts—are used by Secularists, first because they think expressions of enlightened opinion must instruct and reform, and next because they think that expressions of enlightened public opinion may compel in the persons a change of conduct in the future. They don't praise or blame as penalty-punishment for crime in the past; they praise and blame to prevent the recurrence of the crime in the future. (Applause.) Why should you praise or blame a man with uncaused will? What is the use of talking to him at all? His volition is free! Free! Then your words are wasted; your blame is mockery! Praise and blame—that is, words of appreciation or depreciation—words pointing out the mischief or the advantage of a course, are useful when you think that a man's volition is caused. The people who listen to them may be influenced and change their conduct. Dr. McCann thinks that Mr. Bradlaugh's position is that the volition of man is the same as the volition of a plant. Luckily this debate will be in print; luckily it will be read, and one feeling of astonishment will characterise those who read these words of Dr. McCann's. They will turn through the report and they will never find any phrase like it—they will never find a phrase of mine implying any such opinion on my part as

to volition on the part of the plant. You will find phrases implying capability of selection. If you tell me that volition is necessary to that, then it is on you that the affirmation of that proposition comes, because I deal with the capacity I find, and I do not invent abilities for a thing. I wait until I have found evidence of it. But, says Dr. McCann, why not talk of a virtuous or vicious diamond? Because I apply the words virtue and vice to those actions which result in increasing happiness or diminishing it. I have never yet met an acting diamond—(loud laughter)—and have therefore had no reason to characterise its action. If Dr. McCann will give me any illustration of a diamond having done something, then I will tell him whether, in my opinion, the act which the diamond did was an act which tended to the greatest happiness of the greatest number or not. (Laughter.) Until he does that, his question to me is as sensible and as relevant as that alleged to have been put by an arithmetician to his scholars—"If a cart-load of turnips cost £5, how much would a wagon-load of herrings cost? (Laughter.) Dr. McCann says that he is not concerned with the meanings of the words virtue and vice. He declares that you all know what they mean. But, first, you don't all know what they mean. The clergymen whom I read about don't know what the words mean in relation to bribery. If we were discussing this question before these clergymen, we should very likely disagree very strongly as to the meaning of these words. (Laughter.) It is not true that virtue and vice have had a fixed and definite meaning all the world over; it is not true that the same understanding will be had of them to-day in different countries of the world; it is not true that the same understanding has attached itself to them even during a number of centuries in this country. Then Dr. McCann says that I have practically wasted time in this debate by making a demand for definitions where they were not required. I have always thought that definitions were required where it was possible that disputants did not know what they were talking about. Why! you pitch words about here without saying what you mean by them, though on each word there has been wide disagreement. There are no words as to which patient thinkers have differed more than the meaning of right and wrong, moral and immoral, virtuous and vicious—there are

no words which, if you took them round the world and put them with acts, you would find a more astonishing and conflicting variety of actions called into use by each of those very names. Then Dr. McCann says, "You cannot praise or blame." You may if you choose try to reason why we should not: to declare that we cannot is absurd; we do. He says, You cannot praise or blame, because your actions are compelled. Explain why I may not! Oh! you say, my antecedents and organisation compel me. There is no "my antecedents and organisation" apart from "me." Your organisation and antecedents make up the "me." You talk as if the antecedents and organisation were there [pointing to the other end of the Hall], and "me" here. (Loud cheers.) You speak as if poor "me" were the weakly, puny thing, and my antecedents and organisation my separate and irresistible ruler — (applause); and to show that I am not justified in this, Dr. McCann went on to say, "Would Mr. Bradlaugh blame the rose if it was a poor specimen?" No! but I might blame the gardener. (Laughter.) If I met with a Secularist and he were a poor specimen, I would try and change the conditions, so that the next Secularist would be better; and this is what is done by the gardener. They don't praise or blame the rose, but they give it more room in a new pot, fresh mould, more light, new air, fresh soil, less or more of each. They know that as they surround the rose with new conditions so the rose will be changed for better or for worse. (Laughter and applause.) The only difference between myself and Dr. McCann is that he will do with me what he will not do with the rose. He takes away my body, and then he speaks as if the body and the ability of the body were grappling with "me" and making "me" do what they wished. Why! I never propounded such a ridiculous proposition! And then there was a word of good-humored banter respecting why I should propose a vote of thanks to the chairman. If our volition is not free but determined, he says why do I go through the farce of proposing a vote of thanks to the chairman. I will tell you why I do so. I do so because I want the chairman to speak better and more fairly of us in the future—(hear, hear); and I think that the chairman may reason thus about the matter: If Mr. Bradlaugh was good enough and considerate enough to think that my con-

duct as chairman was impartial and deserved thanks, I must try and be at least as good as Mr. Bradlaugh by-and-bye. (Laughter.) Well, now! I may be wrong in that, but still—(renewed laughter)—still that is the sort of reasoning which influences me in proposing that vote. Now we are told that Mr. Bradlaugh has shown that he does not believe in the power of anyone to will any actions. When did I say anything so absurd? The fact is, our friend listens to what I ought to say, according to him, and not to what I do say. He had, with scissors and paste, before he came here, from a huge number of Secularist writings, cut out a man of straw, and he occupies himself in refuting his arguments, and does not touch the arguments I have brought forward in this debate. To say that I do not believe in the power of anyone to will action is to misrepresent the position I have taken in this debate. On the contrary I tried so to define volition—I tried so to picture volition as the phase of mind, often immediately precedent to action—I tried so to put this as to show how each mental phase succeeded until the individual willed. I may have failed; I dare say I did fail, but, at any rate, I never denied man's ability to will any more than I deny man's ability to strike. What we differ about is as to whether the will is in any fashion determined. Our friend says it is free, and then that it is limited to a certain extent, and to the rest of the way it is free—it is tied and it is loosed; and this is the sort of thing which I have to meet in this debate. Then Dr. McCann lays down the proposition that Secularism is anti-social, and that it is practically opposed to the best interests of society; but we have not been told, even in the opinion of Dr. McCann, what the best interests of society are; and I ask, who is to judge them? who is to say what the best interests of society really may be? Take the Irish landlords. There are people alive now who think that the best interests of society consist in maintaining the laws which have enabled them to rob and oppress their fellow-men. It is no use repeating phrases like these about the best interests of society. We must know what they mean. We have been told by Dr. McCann that if a man's volition be determined it is wrong to punish him for acts committed which are injurious to the best interests of society. Permit me to point out that punishment is a different thing from vengeance. Punishment is utterly useless,

except so far as it is administered for the prevention of crime in the future. If it is simply vindictive punishment, then that punishment is in itself a crime. Then he says that we teach that morality consists in pleasing ourselves; but he does not tell you what we mean by pleasure. We teach that the best pleasure to oneself is found in the endeavor to increase the pleasure of those around us. By pleasure we do not mean some low type which he may choose to select. We mean a high—we mean a lofty, a thorough and a clear type; and here I will deal with what Dr. McCann says about disinterested love not being possible to a Secularist. Last week I invited Dr. McCann to give some illustration of what he meant, this he has not done. Of course you may take illustrations of the love of a mother for her child, of a man for his wife, of a woman or man for her or his country, in all of which there may be personal suffering endured through and because of this love. But in each case the individual suffering would be less happy if recreant to the love, although by so being recreant she or he escaped the personal suffering. The happiness of such sacrifice may and does differ in quality, but it is happiness, and I should allege far higher happiness than that of the escape of recreancy. We are told that Secularism denies that any action can be virtuous or vicious. There, again, we have still the putting into my mouth words which put upon me meanings which Dr. McCann invents. I do not mean invents in any unfair sense, that he knows them not to be true, but invents, possibly, because he himself does not understand the position we take. He says, with reference to adultery—he says that according to us there cannot be such things as useless acts. An act cannot be neutral; it must either be for good or for mischief. You say that an act can be neutral. Give me an illustration. It is a question of usefulness or mischief; it is a question of increasing the general happiness or diminishing it. Dr. McCann has introduced another set of acts which are neither virtuous nor vicious, and which he himself has got to explain. He was excessively unfair—I hope he won't think I mean intentionally so—but he was excessively unfair in the comment he made on my answers which he quoted from the Baylee debate. I think I did wrong in rising—Mrs. Besant checked me in so doing;, but I rose because it was so difficult for the audience to understand how

much was comment and how much was quoted. It is perfectly true that Dr. McCann was good enough to state afterwards which was quotation and which was comment; but I have to object that I did not say that it was the duty of a husband to prevent the recurrence of his wife's adultery. You won't find that word "recurrence" there. I said it was the duty of the husband with his wife to prevent the happening; and if the husband loves his wife—if they tried before marriage to understand one another, and to see that they were suited for each other—then the good husband does prevent, not the recurrence of the act, but the possibility of it. (Applause.) I will deal with the responsibility question when I speak again. Then Dr. McCann asks me why is a man bound to do what he can for the mutual happiness of himself and wife? Why? Because in increasing the happiness of the domestic circle he increases the tendency and power of each member of that circle to make happiness in the society to which it belongs. Because each member of that circle may become the centre of such another circle, and so the happiness of one spreads out more and more widely, increasing the general good. You have no such inducement, but the Secularist has. If you say you have, show me where you have. Don't simply fling bricks of opprobrious words at us. Show some stones of your own morality for us to judge. (Loud cheers and cries of "Bravo.")

The Rev. Dr. McCann: I will reply very briefly to what Mr. Bradlaugh has raised in his last speech, and then go on to reply to what he said before. First with regard to Atheism. It does not concern the question what Atheism is. (Oh.) Let Atheism be what it may, it is not the purpose to discuss the truth or falsehood of Atheism in the debate. Secularism is Atheism, let Atheism be what it may. My definition of Secularism was that it is Atheism; that Mr. Bradlaugh has acknowledged, and my work there is ended. (Hisses and interruption.) Mr. Bradlaugh objects to my quotation from Mr. Lewes, which he says does not represent the view of the writer of the History of Philosophy. It was Mr. Lewes' own sentiment that I quoted, and not his statement of the opinions of any other philosopher. He speaks of consciousness being the basis of all philosophy, and he says that if that be rotten the superstructure will fall, but he does not himself hold that that

basis is rotten. He states that Spinoza held that the basis was rotten, but this was not the teaching of Lewes himself. But I have a later work of Lewes' here—"The Problems of Life and Mind;" and, at page 277, vol. i., I read these words, "Consciousness is admitted to be the only ground of certitude." I have here "The Physical Basis of Mind," and at page 334 we read—"We are all agreed that Consciousness is the final arbiter."

Then we have heard a good deal from Mr. Bradlaugh about the opinions of certain clergymen on the bribery question. In reference to that, I will only say that my subject here is the morality of Secularism, and not the morality of clergymen. (Laughter.) Mr. Bradlaugh goes on to ask me "why an uncaused volition should be more moral than a caused volition?" I reply, I do not know, because an uncaused volition I never heard of. All changes are caused. But my friends on the left have no philosophical right to use the word "causation" at all, because their theory is that they know nothing of causation; they only know of antecedents followed by certain consequents. I hold that all changes in the world are caused, and therefore volitions must be caused too. I have contended that utility has nothing whatever to do with the morality of an action; and also if a man's volition be not free he cannot be praised or blamed. I do not say you cannot physically praise or blame; what I do say is, you ought not to do either. (Laughter.) I never denied your physical ability to do so, but what I say is you cannot consistently praise a man for doing what he could not help doing—and you cannot blame a man consistently for doing what he cannot help doing. (Laughter and applause.) I may not dwell the whole evening on this point. I shall now show you that Mr. Bradlaugh denies will altogether of man. He has not spoken of the volition of a plant, but he has referred men and plants to the same category of caused actions. And then he says that if the rose were a poor specimen he would not blame the rose, he would blame the gardener. I blame the gardener, but it is the rose I am talking about—not the gardener. Mr. Bradlaugh, you see, goes outside the rose for blame. You cannot blame the rose. And, therefore, if you are to blame anything, blame something outside me, don't blame me; blame my antecedents if you like, blame my

organisation, but don't blame me—blame the gardener. (Much laughter.) Then our friend found fault with me because I used the term my organisation, my volition, my will; and Mr. Bradlaugh says I speak of these as though they were something beyond "me." Does Mr. Bradlaugh never say my bones, my limbs, my brains, my eye, my hand; and when he does, does it mean his hand is out there beyond him? I still say my organisation, I still say my thought, and my volitions, without, for for one moment, attempting to affirm that consciousness or volition is an entity or not an entity. Then he found fault with me, again, for not defining virtue and vice, and he says that the conceptions regarding virtue and vice vary in different countries. On one point, they have never varied, and never can vary. Wherever there was an action, whether virtuous or vicious, it was a voluntary action. This one point has always been attributed to virtuous and vicious actions—they must be done by the man himself, and not by his antecedents or his organisation—(laughter)—they must be done voluntarily, by exerting his own will, selecting one action rather than another action himself; because, if he did not select the action, then it was not his action at all. The action must be selected by you to become your action, and if it be not your action, you cannot call it a virtue or a vicious action. Now, I will reply to what Mr. Bradlaugh had previously advanced. I have been struggling to get from Mr. Bradlaugh the acknowledgment, in so many words, that men have no will. All his illustrations and his reasonings have involved it; but he did not state it till last night. He then said, "He tells you I did not distinguish between volition and will. The words to me mean the same. I do not know some big lump 'will;' I do not know some complete entity 'will;' I do not know some ability marked 'will,' each activity of which is a volition. I only know the effective volition consequent upon antecedents." There I want nothing more on that subject, as man, it is affirmed, is without "will." In my view will is partly determined and partly free; and once more I say that, asking me for the line of demarcation between the freedom and the determination, is asking me for the impossible. Will Mr. Bradlaugh draw me the line between ignorance and learning, and tell me where ignorance ends and learning

commences? (Applause and laughter.) When he does that I will draw the line between determination and freedom. It is made a ground of complaint against me that when I wanted a definition of morality I did not go to the principles quoted by Mr. Bradlaugh in his first speech, and which were so carefully drawn up by the Committee of the Secular Society. In the first place, it was not for Mr. Bradlaugh to define Secularism; it was for me to define Secularism. He could object to my definition if he chose, but he was to follow my lead; I was not to follow Mr. Bradlaugh's lead. I thought the "Text Book of Freethought" as good a place to go to as any, and now I am glad I did not go to those principles, as it would only have been a waste of time, as there is no definition of morality there whatever. We are told what Secularists consider a test of morality, but we are not told what morality is. Telling me how I can test the presence of an acid is not saying what the acid is. Nitric acid may be a test for gold, but nitric acid is not gold. (Much laughter.) If that be your chemistry, to think nitric acid gold, I have nothing further to say! (Renewed laughter.) The word test, here, is altogether inappropriate. Utility may be to others a test for morality, but not to the Secularist. The Secularist test is the very thing we want to get at, but which apparently does not exist. Mr. Bradlaugh says he knows what is useful to-day, but cannot tell us what may be useful to-morrow. That is, he has a test for the morality of to-day, but none for that of to-morrow; that what is morality to-day may be immorality to-morrow; that what was immorality yesterday may be moral to-day; so that morality is so fluctuating a thing that you never know where to have it. (Oh, oh, and applause). He tells me that I have given him no test for my morality, but he forgets that I am discussing, not my morality, but his. (Hear, hear.) I wish to know about his tests; he has at present no concern with mine. (Oh!) I prefer discussing one subject at a time; and when I say that utility is not morality, I define so far only as to enable him to understand why I say it is not morality. I define morality as rightness, and what I mean by rightness I leave to the general judgment of thinkers. (Oh, oh, and laughter.) I appeal to the practical judgment of mankind. Why! we might spend night after night on logical definitions without being any

the wiser. (Laughter.) All I want to make clear now is, that when we say an action is useful we refer to one quality, but when we say it is right we mean something else—never mind what else—(laughter, and oh, oh)—something else. It is sufficient to show that the words referring to utility and the words referring to morality are not interchangeable terms, and, if not, then morality and utility are not the same thing. But Mr. Bradlaugh further charges me with being unfair because I say that Mr. Mill is inconsistent when he adds quality of pleasure to quantity. Why unfair? I do not take away any quality of pleasure, as is asserted, but I do say that utility has nothing whatever to do with quality of pleasure. Will Mr. Bradlaugh show that it has. If the greatest number should find their happiness in the most grovelling vices, whatever contributes to their happiness must be in harmony with Secular morality. (Hear, hear.) I am asked to give an illustration of a moral act that is not a useful act. I cannot—for, as I have already said, I believe all moral acts are useful. I am also asked to name a useful act that is not moral. Of course, from a Secular point of view it would be impossible, as they are the same things. I could not name even the ripening of an apple, for that is useful and contributes to the happiness of some, and is therefore moral. From my own point of view I have given one in the case of the musician playing only for pay. I am also asked, in reference to champagne, why a pleasurable action may not be a moral act. I see no reason why it should not; but the pleasure is one thing and the morality is another. I see no reason why a red body should not be a round body, but redness is one thing and the roundness another. The further query put to me: "Why should not the selfish thing be also a moral thing?" Because morality, as understood by all but utilitarians, excludes selfishness. Selfishness, however, according to Mr. Bradlaugh, is the highest morality. He will not permit me to say that he does good for its own sake. He said, and with the approval of his followers here, that he would increase the general amount of happiness because by that means he would increase his own. That is, he sells his activities as the baker sells his loaves, for what he can get for them. Mr. Bradlaugh says he never saw an active diamond that gave pleasure. I never saw an inactive diamond, or one that did not.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I never said that. I never said that I never saw an active diamond that gave happiness. I never saw an active diamond at all. What I said was that I never met with an acting diamond, which is a very different thing from the words which are put into my mouth. I am sure Dr. McCann would not misrepresent me intentionally. May I beg you to be very patient with Dr. McCann in his next speech—the closing one on his part in this debate—so that we may conclude in orderly fashion? Dr. McCann has asked me to draw the line between ignorance and learning, and he asks me to tell him where one finishes and the other commences. Luckily, I had prepared a very small piece bearing upon that, which I will read to you. Dr. McCann, substituting inaccurately knowledge for consciousness, defines knowledge as certainty, and jests with me, that, if not, increase of knowledge may mean increase of error. But what is understood by Dr. McCann in thus using the word knowledge? The Mahomedan knows that there is one God, and that Mahomed is his prophet. The Trinitarian knows that Christ is God. The Unitarian knows that Christ is not God. Dr. McCann may answer that these are not cases of knowledge, but of belief. Therefore I will take another illustration. A man knows that a cloth is red, another man—color-blind—knows that the same cloth is green. If Dr. McCann should say, as he may well do, that these are not illustrations of knowledge, will he give one illustration which he thinks accurate to guide us? Does knowing a thing mean more than that in thought we distinguish the thing perceived from other things—that is, from other phænomena? We so distinguish it, accurately or inaccurately, according to our sensative abilities and their efficiency. The accurate distinguishment of phænomena I should describe as knowledge. Ignorance I should describe as the inaccurate attempt at distinguishment, as the inaccurate result of imperfect distinguishment. Knowledge I should define as commencing when clear and accurate distinguishment is, and that distinguishment is remembered. Dr. McCann says it "does not concern him what Atheism is." "It may be what it likes." No! but is it what I define it? Because, if it be what I define it, all that you said about it amounts to nothing. I am sorry that Dr. McCann, too, did not appreciate what I put as to Lewes.

Either I have misunderstood his answer, or it was not quite accurate. If you refer to the pages of Lewes which I gave, you will see that I have been specifically accurate, and when Dr. McCann spoke of Lewes as if saying that Spinoza was fallacious, and replying that Lewes did not say that, the fallaciousness of Spinoza does not enter into the quotation. The only phrase relating to Spinoza is, "No thinker except Spinoza has so clearly, so frankly stated his criterion." What Lewes meant by that was this: Whether you agree with Spinoza or not, he writes very clearly what he means to convey. Lewes said Spinoza has done this clearly; Descartes did it clearly, too; and the criterion of Descartes so clearly given is fallacious. The words are here, and there is no excuse for saying that I have not correctly represented the quotations and the consequence of them. It will be a matter for you to examine when you read the debate. It is not a question of what is the ground of certitude, but whether consciousness itself is the measure of certitude, and whether that what you determine is your consciousness is therefore certain; because you so put it. Remember that I, myself, have put it that to make up consciousness you have perception, memory of perception, reflection upon these, conception as to and founded on these, judgment and discrimination in relation to perception and conception; and the exactitude of each and all of these goes to make up any certitude there is. But then the question comes, may not there be points in all these stages of inability to distinguish, and of inability to remember the points of distinguishment? Dr. McCann says he does not hold the doctrine of uncaused will. He affirms all changes are caused. By what is volition caused, according to him? If you say you don't know—which you have a perfect right to say—then all this debate is beside the question, and you should never have entered into it. We are told that we cannot consistently praise or blame the man. We can consistently praise or blame the man, that is—and I was careful to put what I meant by praise and blame in my last speech—we can express our appreciation of the act done, and we can apply this with advice to the repetition or advice against the recurrence of the act; because we hold that that advice, and the strong expression of our opinion, may influence the man—may influence the

future action about it. Then with regard to the rose and the gardener. I will not do Dr. McCann the injustice of supposing that he did not listen to what I said. I pointed out why I might blame the gardener. I might see whether or not the gardener had attended to his business—whether or not he knew the best kinds of soil and surroundings for his rose tree, and then I should blame him in the sense of instructing him so that he might do better in the future, and I should especially instruct him in making that point of rose culture better in the future which had been worse in the past. Our friend puts it as though I made—as perhaps he does—some mighty gardener who was responsible for the morality of the world. But, says Dr. McCann, I do distinguish between the organisation and the individual. I spoke of my hand. What did I mean by that? My hand! But you don't say my hand gripped me in spite of myself and put me on the broad of my back—(laughter)—and you did wish to put it as if I urged that the antecedents and the organisation compelled me. You did distinguish and did make them into separate things, whether, in your mind, they are entities or not. Well, then, we are told that there is one thing the world is always agreed about, and that is—it is rather rash to say what the world is altogether agreed about—that all actions, whether they be regarded as moral or immoral, virtuous or vicious, are regarded as voluntary. Will you please tell me, excepting certain reflex actions, on which I would rather express no opinion in this debate, as not affecting its subject-matter, what you mean by a voluntary or an involuntary act. Explain to me, so that I may see that you have formulated, even to yourself, any distinction at all. I should put it to you that all actions are voluntary actions—eliminating, for the moment, and avoiding any declaration that they are not voluntary—all reflex actions. Now Dr. McCann says that I know nothing of volition except as consequent on antecedents, and he seemed to contend from that that I denied volition altogether. I do not see any connection between the two propositions. I make an affirmation of volition of a most distinct character, and it is for you to say anything opposed to that. When you have told me that volition is caused, it is for you to show how that differs from volition consequent on antecedents. Show me what

the difference is between succeeding that which is antecedent to it in consequence of the antecedents having happened, and being caused. (Applause.) Will, then, Dr. McCann say that it was for him to define Secularism and for me to object? But I did object—(laughter)—and I gave what I said was the more accurate definition of it, and you have never answered it. You say you have nothing to do with the Secularism explained in my first speech. You should have told me this when I informed you that the Secularism I should defend would be that of the National Secular Society. Then we are told that I have said we have no code of morality, for what is morality to-day is immorality to-morrow. I think what I said was that we could only judge of what was useful—what was moral—by the knowledge of to-day, but that the knowledge of to-morrow might throw fresh light and teach us that other things were morality which we to-day knew not of. I think I have always distinguished and clearly put it that the only way in which you can estimate the utility of an action is by the best judgment of the period in which the action takes place. But to put it in the way Dr. McCann has done is not answering me, but only misrepresenting what I say. Then he says that utility is not morality, for it must be right as well as useful. What do you mean by right? It is not enough when you say an action is right, and therefore it is morality. What is moral? Oh! he says, never mind what that means. But I do mind what it means. What is the use of debating it if we never mind what it means. Do you know what it means? I don't think you do. I don't think you have refrained from telling us what it means; I think that you have been unable to tell us. I don't think you have any test, any standard, which you are willing to submit to criticism. You may have some code of laws, some standard, which you withhold because you are afraid to submit it to my examination. (Loud continued cheers and cries of bravo.) You may have some language, some decree of some head gardener, and you may not want me to look into it. But except that which you dare not bring here I do not think you have anything at all to produce to us. Then Dr. McCann asks me will I show him what utility has to do with the quality of pleasure. Utility is the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The greatest happiness

is the greatest happiness, the measure of quality is the measure of the greatness of it, and therefore the volition has to do with the quality of happiness. In his first speech Dr. McCann asked me if I did not accept his quotation from the King Debate on marriage to state my real view, and I will, therefore, explain what I mean by marriage, on which subject I have not been fairly represented. I mean by marriage, apart from all churches and chapels—(hear, hear)—apart from all laws, all States, when one man and one woman, honestly, lovingly, and truly unite themselves to one another, intending to try to make the happiness of each more complete through life. (Applause.) I know that some countries have fixed vile ceremonies, that some have added religious forms to marriage. I know that vile customs have been practised with reference to it. I know that in some countries they slit men's faces to mark the act of marriage; and I ask you is it one of these customs or ceremonies you want to put, as making marriage, or what other view of marriage against me dare you put than the one I have given? (Loud continued cheering.)

The Rev. Dr. McCann: Mr. Bradlaugh has objected to my changing the word immoral into useless, because he says there are no acts which are useless acts; and, if you introduce a third class of acts, you acknowledge there are actions which are neither virtuous nor vicious. I at once admit there are acts which are neither useful nor useless—indifferent acts. If I look at a picture, I don't call that action necessarily either virtuous or vicious; it is an example of actions which are neither useful nor pernicious. Then, with reference to my quotation from the Baylee Debate, I have not the pamphlet with me, but, so far as I remember, Dr. Baylee was supposing the case of a man who had committed the act—what responsibility had he to the husband? And the reply is that the husband should do the best to prevent the happening of the action again, or the recurrence of the action. This, at least, is what Mr. Bradlaugh has stated in substance. Then he has defined learning and ignorance, and I can also define necessity and freedom in volition; but that does not tell me where to draw the universal line. We are told that where ignorance ends knowledge begins. Well, of course it does; and where determination ends, there freedom begins. But to say you can draw one

line for all human beings is to say that all human beings are equally ignorant or equally learned. About the veracity of consciousness, Mr. Bradlaugh tell us that one man knows cloth to be red, and another knows that cloth to be green. They know nothing of the kind. I was speaking of subjective and not of objective consciousness. Professor Huxley refers to color-blindness to show that our senses deceive us; we must have something beyond our senses to give us certainty. (Laughter and interruption.) With reference to Lewes, I will only say that the debate will be printed, and the words will be there; and in your calm and quiet moments read the debate and compare one side with the other. I am perfectly content to abide by your verdict. I never intended to imply anything so absurd as that Mr. Bradlaugh had made a mighty gardener, because he said that the blame ought to be given to the gardener, and not to the rose. Then I stated that one quality of every act called virtuous or vicious was that it must, in all cases, be voluntary, and Mr. Bradlaugh asks me, what is voluntary? That does not touch my affirmation. Before a man apprehends an act to be virtuous or vicious it must be what he believes to be a voluntary act; and if the act were believed to be an involuntary one, you would neither call it virtue nor vice. Then with regard to praise and blame. I must explain that I was talking about the praise of a person and not of an act. You may praise an act, and dispraise a person. (Hisses, interruption, and cheers.) I am exclusively speaking now of praising or blaming persons. My part in this debate now draws to a close, and it becomes my duty to epitomise on my side what has been done, and how far I think I have succeeded or failed. But, before doing so, allow me to thank my opponent for the courtesy with which I have been treated. I have done all I could, consistently with my duty, to avoid any personal references that might arouse angry feelings; my friend has done the same. I am always willing to argue, but I cannot condescend to quarrel—(applause)—and if all controversies were conducted as harmoniously as ours has been, it would, I think, be better for the cause of truth. My object in this debate has been not so much to prove the abstract truth or falseness of the Secularist positions, as to have those positions explained and

acknowledged, as I consider this their best refutation. Secularists indulge in so many fine phrases, and profess so much earnestness in the cause of a deluded humanity, and so much heroism in the cause of civil and religious liberty, that it becomes necessary to see whether all this be as fair as it looks, whether the blossom that promises so much be healthy, or whether there be not some hidden worm there that will prevent the blossom setting into fruit. I at once say that my object has been fully attained—(a voice: "How about the gardener?" and laughter)—that my opponent has granted all my important positions—(interruption)—yielding without a struggle what I fancied he would fight for, and only showing fight over some distant outpost which was not of much comparative importance to either party. However, he knew his own forces best, and if he had no hope of capturing my citadel, his best policy was to blaze away at the outer lines. I now proceed to show rapidly that I am justified in saying this. I begin with Mr. Bradlaugh's denials, as they are the fewest in number, in fact the only important one is that consciousness is reliable. This he denies most emphatically, and with a perseverance and reiteration that I thought quite unnecessary when there were other matters to decide. His reasons will form interesting and suggestive reading when the debate is published. It is Mr. Bradlaugh on the one side and the best psychologists on the other. His confessions are almost as complete as I could wish them. He has confessed that Secularism is Atheism with all that Atheism involves; that Secularism is Necessitarianism, denying all will to man, all power of self-control, all choice, all agency in action, reducing him to the level of the plant so far as will is concerned—neither having any; that while man is higher in degree in other respects he is no higher in this—the most important of all; the plant and mineral being only the transmitters of received force. No wonder Mr. Bradlaugh did his very utmost to shake the reliability of consciousness, as consciousness gives the lie direct to degradation such as this. It has been confessed that Secular morality is utility; it knows nothing higher than usefulness—nay, it knows nothing so high, for its usefulness means usefulness ultimately to self. Mr. Bradlaugh told us the highest morality (that is, Secular

morality) is selfishness. Selfishness, then, is the highest motive force of Secularism. But is selfishness the regenerator of society? Is selfishness the purifier of the lives of men? Is selfishness the inspirer of sympathy? Does selfishness keep a mother tending her sick child at the risk of her own life? Does selfishness take the volunteer into the forlorn hope, with almost certain destruction before him? Does selfishness take the miner down the shaft, with suffocation threatening him on every side? Does selfishness man the lifeboat, with death riding on the crest of every wave? (Applause.) Does selfishness, or ever did or could selfishness, do anything great, or grand, or glorious in the world? The fact is, selfishness is nothing more than Epicureanism—(laughter)—nothing more nor less than the desire for pleasure. The only reply to my affirmation that moral actions were voluntary, is the question, What do I mean by voluntary? All I said about virtue and vice is dismissed with the remark, that men have differed as to what is virtuous and what is vicious. I have not been told why if virtue be attributed to men, it should not also be to plants. Praise and blame have been transferred from the rose to the gardener, and from the person to his acts. Nothing has been said in reply to my charge that Secularism is a bundle of contradictions—that Secularism is anti-social. I have abundantly shown by its denial of responsibility between man and man, and the position in which it places virtue and vice, praise and blame. It has not been denied that it contradicts consciousness, has no absolute standard of truth or morality; that society has a right to determine its own morality, and enforce its own determination. What more could be confessed against Secularism than all this my opponent has confessed, I am at loss to imagine. Mr. Bradlaugh has said that he tries to make more Atheists every day. I do not envy him his task. I try to unmake Atheists when I meet them —(hisses and interruption)—therefore I am here to-night because I believe Secularism to be destructive of all that is noblest and best in man. I have stated the reasons of my belief as fairly, as honestly, and as kindly as I could. I hope I may leave no enemy behind me—(hear, hear)—and my final and sincerest utterance is that we may all at last be found on the side of truth. (Loud continued cheers and

cries of bravo, during which Dr. McCann resumed his seat.)

Mr. BRADLAUGH: If the Rev. Dr. McCann is no better acquainted with Secularism than he appears to be with Epicureanism when he says that Epicureanism is selfishness, it is perhaps not surprising that we make little progress in our debate. I won't do Dr. McCann the injustice of supposing that he has read the debate between Dr. Baylee and myself, so I will not accuse him of intentionally misrepresenting me or my views; I can only suppose that he has taken the extracts which he has used against me to-night from a report full of wilful misrepresentations of my utterances—such, for instance, as that published by a wretched scoundrel like Henry Varley—a report which omits every word which will do me any good, and puts in every word which, torn from its context, is likely to do mischief to me. As Dr. McCann was quoting from that debate answers purporting to have been given by myself, I thought that some of the phrases did not seem to be quite complete; but as twenty long years has passed since the debate took place, I hoped my memory might have mislead me. I therefore sent for a copy of the debate, which I now hold in my hand, and from which I will read the answers of which Dr. McCann has only read you disjointed sentences. In so doing I must express my regret that Dr. McCann did not think it worth while to obtain an original report, instead of quoting third or fourth-hand from a sixpenny debate.

Dr. MCCANN was understood to intimate that the edition he quoted from was a report issued by Dr. Baylee.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: This (holding up a pamphlet) is a copy of a report of which some sixty thousand have been sold during the last twenty years, and it is the only report of the existence of which I am aware. If Dr. Baylee has issued one, and has been as dishonest in his representations as Mr. Varley has been, I can only say that I regret there are two of them. I have to thank my co-worker, Mrs. Besant, who pointed out to me that there was a difference between the answers read by Dr. McCann and the report which I hold in my hand, and drew my attention to the difference, so that I should not be burdened with words which I had not uttered; and I will read to you from this report the answers of mine which Dr. McCann partially

quoted, so that you may be able to see for yourselves the misrepresentations of which I complain. Dr. Baylee asks: "To whom is man responsible?"—I reply: "I do not know that he is responsible to anyone." Dr. Baylee: "Then if a man commit adultery is he responsible to no one?"—Answer: "If by responsibility you mean does the commission of an immorality tend to misery, yes; if you mean more than that, no." Dr. Baylee: "Is he not responsible to the husband?"—and here is where you will find a difference occurs—"One must have the whole of the circumstances to say yes or no. Suppose a husband were unkind to his wife,"—and here Dr. McCann stopped, leaving out the next words: "suppose a husband were unkind to his wife, that he turned her into the street for the basest of purposes, would your question apply to such a husband?" (Loud applause.) I rose at that answer, as mutilated by Dr. McCann, because I knew there was something wrong as it was put to you. However, this is not the strongest. Dr. Baylee continues: "Is he responsible to a good and kind husband?"—My answer was: "If by responsible you mean, should a good husband take measure to prevent the commission of adultery, yes; if more, what do you mean?"—that is, prevent the commission, not the recurrence. Dr. Baylee: "After the act of adultery, is he responsible to a good and kind husband?"—Myself: "As you have given no further explanation of what you mean by responsibility, I have no further answer to give." Dr. Baylee: "I mean responsibility in its common, popular sense."—Myself: "You and I disagree as to the common, popular sense of words. Give me your definition of the word 'responsibility.'" Dr. Baylee: "Do you refuse to answer the question?"—Answer: "If you refuse to define the word 'responsibility'—yes." All that was omitted in reading it to you. Dr. Baylee: "What do you suppose will all sane persons judge of your refusal?"—Answer: "That you did not find it convenient to define the word you used, and that I was not foolish enough to answer a question until we both agreed upon its meaning." (Applause and laughter.) Dr. Baylee: "Has the husband a right to inflict any punishment on the adulterer?"—I replied: "I do not understand what you mean by a right; but if a man were to rob me of that which I prize more

than all the world besides, then if I came upon him in hot blood in the excitement of passion, I should probably kill him, because my passions might be stronger than my reason. If I came on him when my passion had cooled, I cannot so certainly speak as to the result. Others might be of stronger organisation, others again of weaker frame, and their conduct would necessarily vary." Dr. Baylee then asked me: "Has society a right to punish the adulterer?" —and I answered him: "Society is bound to do that which will prevent the commission of immoral deeds. Punishment should only be preventive of future crime, not vengeance for that which has passed." (Bravo and applause.) Now, I ask you, was that which was read to you by Dr. McCann a fair representation of my answer? It was not even anything like it. I do Dr. McCann the justice of supposing that—although he appears to be thoroughly well acquainted with all my debates, and that he knows that I have published versions of most of them—I do him the justice of supposing that he was ignorant of the existence of this, or I feel sure that he would have thought it due to me to quote from this report, and not to use one that perverts the views which I take as to marriage with the object of injuring me. In order that you may be perfectly clear as to my utterance in this debate with Dr. Baylee on this important point, I will read to you the answer on marriage to Dr. Baylee's question, for, curiously enough, that was stopped in the same way. Dr. Baylee asks—"What does Atheism teach about marriage?" Answer—"It teaches that if a man take a woman he is bound to do everything that a man can for their mutual happiness, also the woman for the man. It teaches that the man and the woman should be thoughtful before marriage, to see that they have a mutually suitable organisation; that they should endeavour to thoroughly understand and appreciate each other; that the man and the woman have equal rights and duties, that, on the whole, the man is not inferior to the woman, that the woman is not inferior to the man, but in the speciality of each there is much that the other cannot do." Dr. Baylee then asks: "If their organisation be unsuitable, may they separate at will?" To which I replied: "If they both be of opinion that their continued union would tend to misery, it would be better for them to separate than to live

in strife and unhappiness; and that is a principle now fully recognised in the tendency of our present legislation." Surely, when you are trying to represent that our views on marriage are abominable views—surely it would only be just to try and see whether you are giving the most accurate version of them—(Bravo)—or whether you may not possibly, from the hands of a hostile and very unscrupulous antagonist, be taking what we have not said, and may be using an untruth to discredit us. And you must remember that no man has ever yet had to charge me with publishing an incorrect report of any debate that I have ever held. My own reports have been used by my antagonists, and it has never been alleged against me—bad as some of my enemies would make me out to be—that I have descended so low as to publish an inaccurate report. And here let me complain that Dr. McCann persists in substituting the word pleasure for happiness throughout this debate. Whether he thinks that the word pleasure will give you a lower opinion of our creed or not I do not know, but he speaks of the greatest pleasure for the selfish person in such a way as would lead you to suppose that we advocated the pleasure of individuals instead of the happiness of all: thus putting upon us a doctrine we do not hold. Then, Dr. McCann says that there are acts which are neither virtuous nor vicious. If he looks at a picture or reads a poem, that is an act, according to him, which can neither be characterised as a virtuous or a vicious action. Now, it may be either. It may be either a virtuous act or a vicious act. It depends entirely upon the picture and the poetry—(applause)—and the illustration is one of the most unfortunate that could possibly have been used. Then Dr. McCann says that knowledge and ignorance cannot be separated. But surely this is merely to play with words. I defined what I meant by "knowledge," and pointed out the particular point in the definition where I said there was ignorance and where there was not. Then, all through this debate until to-night consciousness, according to Dr. McCann, was one and invariable. To-night, for the first time, we hear of the existence of two consciousnesses—objective and subjective. Not until the last speech in the debate—when he knows no new matter may be introduced in answer by me—does Dr. McCann say one

word about this other consciousness, which has been carefully concealed in a back pocket, and only brought out at the eleventh hour. And then we are asked is selfishness this, that, or the other, and will it take the miner down the shaft of an exploded mine? With selfishness, as such, I am not here concerned; but if you mean, will Secularism do so, yes! When flame burst out in Swaithe Main pit, when the stifling gas rolled up, when men were in peril below, and all round the pit mouth shrunk back; when to descend seemed certain death, and all feared to face it, then it was William Washington, an Atheist, a Secularist, who sprang into the cage, and set the example of perilling life to save those below. (Bravo, and loud applause.) As president of the National Secular Society I had the good fortune to present him with the testimonial which was awarded to him for his brave conduct. (Applause.) You say in answer to my declaration that I tried to make Atheists, that you try to unmake them. Yes; but there is one difference—I succeed. (Loud cheers.) You ask, is Secularism an inspirer of sympathy; will it tend to regenerate the world; will it act as a purifier of the lives of men; will it make a man fling himself into the forlorn hope? Yes it will, and it has done so with me. Name one struggle for liberty within the last twenty-five years in which I have not engaged, one great reform for which I have not labored? When your bishops were voting for an unjust war, when your Christian Jingoes came with bludgeons in favor of war into Hyde Park—when the clergy were silent—it was I, the Secularist, who lifted up my voice for peace at the peril of my life. (Loud applause.) It inspires us to try, because in the very inspiration, in the trying, we have a happiness of which you can know nothing. I do not know whether you have any morality at all. You have kept it from us in this debate if you have any, and you have shown that you did not understand ours. You have said that ours has failed; but you have not shown where. You have indulged in denunciation, repetitions of denunciations, and then you say that I have only attacked your outworks. Outworks! Your very citadel is but a mud fort, fenced about with a few rotten bamboos; it is taken, and in its very midst we have planted the flag of truth, and it flies there and has not been touched. (Loud cheers.)

I cannot pretend to vie with you in figures of speech. I cannot pretend, because I always try to make mine fit in with the subject to which I apply them, and you take a wider license. But we assail the fort of bigotry, of prejudice, of ignorance, the fort held by those who call actions immoral because they do not comprehend them, who denounce those who toil for the greatest happiness of the community without trying to emulate them, who invent, and then blame us for the invention, who take our views from our antagonists, and not from ourselves. I, too, am satisfied with this debate; not as well satisfied as if you had examined the views I hold and demonstrated their error, but satisfied because I take it that from one so able, one so practised, one so thoroughly reputed as of great ability amongst those to whom he belongs, I take it he has said the worst that could be said of Secularism, and those who hear or read will judge its value. They will also rate at its true worth the miserable artifice of quoting something which was not said in a debate twenty years ago, and representing that as Secularism. I do not mean that Dr. McCann has done this—he has been misled by those by whom he is put forward, the Varleys, and the vile things who, in fields and open spaces, where we are not to answer for ourselves, stab our reputation and our children's, and try to make a prejudice against us, that even in the House of Commons itself may be used for want of a better weapon. In this debate I have spoken as the representative of the National Secular Society, and in defending the principles of Secularism I have undertaken no new task. The views I have here defended have been mine for many a long year, and in their defence I have never flinched, I have never wavered. I put them to you to-day, as I did when I was a boy in Bonner's Fields, and I am no more ashamed of them now than I was then. (Prolonged enthusiastic cheering.)

On the motion of Mr. Bradlaugh, seconded by Dr. McCann, the usual vote of thanks was unanimously accorded to the Chairman for presiding, and the proceedings then terminated.